

Collab Fest Notes 61 - 83

Collab Fest 61 - 12.01.10

prints by dickie eikcid, a wooden first aid kit / music box from johnson and garland, henry playing with hula-hoops (not a dance, not a performance, just a child playing), much talk of festivals and museums (often with an oddly ironic conspiratorial tone, perhaps conspiracy without hope - or... we can hope... conspiracy as play)

photographs by sue and jim leftwich



TO KARL MARX, 1846

PIERRE-JOSEPH PROUDHON (From *Correspondence*, 1874-5)

Lyon, 17 May 1846

Let us seek together, if you wish, the laws of society, the manner in which these laws are realized, the process by which we shall succeed in discovering them; but, for God's sake, after having demolished all the *a priori* dogmatisms, do not let us in our turn dream of indoctrinating the people; do not let us fall into the contradiction of your compatriot Martin Luther, who, having overthrown Catholic theology, at once set about, with excommunication and anathema, the foundation of a Protestant theology. For the last three centuries Germany has been mainly occupied in undoing Luther's shoddy work; do not let us leave humanity with a similar mess to clear up as a result of our efforts. I applaud with all my heart your thought of bringing all opinions to light; let us carry on a good and loyal polemic; let us give the world an example of learned and far-sighted tolerance, but let us not, merely because we are at the head of a movement, make ourselves the leaders of a new intolerance, let us not pose as the apostles of a new religion, even if it be the religion of logic, the religion of reason. Let us gather together and encourage all protests, let us brand all exclusiveness, all mysticism; let us never regard a question as exhausted, and when we have used our last argument, let us begin again, if need be, with eloquence and irony. On that condition, I will gladly enter your association. Otherwise - no!

Collab Fest 62 - 12.15.10

sometimes we have collab fest events with no photographs. this time we have collab fest photos with no event. for anyone who showed up after 7:20, when i left, my apologies. warren called around 7:30 and came by the house for a couple of hours. two people in conversation is sometimes all we need for a collab fest.



Tristan Tzara Lecture On Dada

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I don't have to tell you that for the general public and for you, the refined public, a Dadaist is the equivalent of a leper. But that is only a manner of speaking. When these same people get close to us, they treat us with that remnant of elegance that comes from their old habit of belief in progress. At ten yards distance, hatred begins again. If you ask me why, I won't be able to tell you.

Another characteristic of Dada is the continuous breaking off of our friends. They are always breaking off and resigning. The first to tender his resignation from the Dada movement *was myself.* Everybody knows that Dada is nothing. I broke away from Dada and from myself as soon as I understood the implications of *nothing.*

If I continue to do something, it is because it amuses me, or rather because I have a need for activity which I use up and satisfy wherever I can. Basically, the true Dadas have always been separate from Dada. Those who acted as if Dada were important enough to resign from with a big noise have been motivated by a desire for personal publicity, proving that counterfeiters have always wriggled like unclean worms in and out of the purest and most radiant religions.

I know that you have come here today to hear explanations. Well, don't expect to hear any explanations about Dada. You explain to me why you exist. You haven't the faintest idea. You will say: I exist to make my children happy. But in your hearts you know that isn't so. You will say: I exist to guard my country, against barbarian invasions. That's a fine reason. You will say: I exist because God wills. That's a fairy tale for children. You will never be able to tell me why you exist but you will always be ready to maintain a serious attitude about life. You will never understand that life is a pun, for you will never be alone enough to reject hatred, judgments, all these things that require such an effort, in favor of a calm level state of mind that makes everything equal and without importance. Dada is not at all modern. It is more in the nature of a return to an almost Buddhist religion of indifference. Dada covers things with an artificial gentleness, a snow of butterflies released from the head of a prestidigitator. Dada is immobility and does not comprehend the passions. You will call this a paradox, since Dada is manifested only in violent acts. Yes, the reactions of individuals

contaminated by *destruction* are rather violent, but when these reactions are exhausted, annihilated by the Satanic insistence of a continuous and progressive "What for?" what remains, what dominates is *indifference.* But with the same note of conviction I might maintain the contrary.

I admit that my friends do not approve this point of view. But the *Nothing* can be uttered only as the reflection of an individual. And that is why it will be valid for everyone, since everyone is important only for the individual who is expressing himself.--I am speaking of myself. Even that is too much for me. How can I be expected to speak of all men at once, and satisfy them too?

Nothing is more delightful than to confuse and upset people. People one doesn't like. What's the use of giving them explanations that are merely food for curiosity? The truth is that people love nothing but themselves and their little possessions, their income, their dog. This state of affairs derives from a false conception of property. If one is poor in spirit, one possesses a sure and indomitable intelligence, a savage logic, a point of view that can not be shaken. Try to be empty and fill your brain cells with a petty happiness. Always destroy what you have in you. On random walks. Then you will be able to understand many things. You are not more intelligent than we, and we are not more intelligent than you.

Intelligence is an organization like any other, the organization of society, the organization of a bank, the organization of chit-chat. At a society tea. It serves to create order and clarity where there is none. It serves to create a state hierarchy. To set up classifications for rational work. To separate questions of a material order from those of a cerebral order, but to take the former very seriously. Intelligence is the triumph of sound education and pragmatism. Fortunately life is something else and its pleasures are innumerable. They are not paid for in the coin of liquid intelligence.

These observations of everyday conditions have led us to a realization which constitutes our minimum basis of agreement, aside from the sympathy which binds us and which is inexplicable. It would not have been possible for us to found our agreement on principles. For everything is relative. What are the Beautiful, the Good, Art, Freedom? Words that have a different meaning for every individual. Words with the pretension of creating agreement among all, and that is why they are written with capital letters. Words which have not the moral value and objective force that people have grown accustomed to finding in them. Their meaning changes from one individual, one epoch, one country to the next. Men are different. It is diversity that makes life interesting. There is no common basis in men's minds. The unconscious is inexhaustible and uncontrollable. Its force surpasses us. It is as mysterious as the last particle of a brain cell. Even if we knew it, we could not reconstruct it. What good did the theories of the philosophers do us? Did they help us to take a single step forward or backward? What is forward, what is backward? Did they alter our forms of contentment? We are. We argue, we dispute, we get excited. The rest is sauce. Sometimes pleasant, sometimes mixed with a limitless boredom, a swamp dotted with

tufts of dying shrubs.

We have had enough of the intelligent movements that have stretched beyond measure our credulity in the benefits of science. What we want now is spontaneity. Not because it is better or more beautiful than anything else. But because everything that issues freely from ourselves, without the intervention of speculative ideas, represents us. We must intensify this quantity of life that readily spends itself in every quarter. Art is not the most precious manifestation of life. Art has not the celestial and universal value that people like to attribute to it. Life is far more interesting. Dada knows the correct measure that should be given to art: with subtle, perfidious methods, Dada introduces it into daily life. And vice versa. In art, Dada reduces everything to an initial simplicity, growing always more relative. It mingles its caprices with the chaotic wind of creation and the barbaric dances of savage tribes. It wants logic reduced to a personal minimum, while literature in its view should be primarily intended for the individual who makes it. Words have a weight of their own and lend themselves to abstract construction. The absurd has no terrors for me, for from a more exalted point of view everything in life seems absurd to me. Only the elasticity of our conventions creates a bond between disparate acts. The Beautiful and the True in art do not exist; what interests me is the intensity of a personality transposed directly, clearly into the work; the man and his vitality; the angle from which he regards the elements and in what manner he knows how to gather sensation, emotion, into a lacework of words and sentiments.

Dada tries to find out what words mean before using them, from the point of view not of grammar but of representation. Objects and colors pass through the same filter. It is not the new technique that interests us, but the spirit. Why do you want us to be preoccupied with a pictorial, moral, poetic, literary, political or social renewal? We are well aware that these renewals of means are merely the successive cloaks of the various epochs of history, uninteresting questions of fashion and facade. We are well aware that people in the costumes of the Renaissance were pretty much the same as the people of today, and that Chouang-Dsi was just as Dada as we are. You are mistaken if you take Dada for a modern school, or even for a reaction against the schools of today. Several of my statements have struck you as old and natural, what better proof that you were a Dadaist without knowing it, perhaps even before the birth of Dada.

You will often hear that Dada is a state of mind. You may be gay, sad, afflicted, joyous, melancholy or Dada. Without being literary, you can be romantic, you can be dreamy, weary, eccentric, a businessman, skinny, transfigured, vain, amiable or Dada. This will happen later on in the course of history when Dada has become a precise, habitual word, when popular repetition has given it the character of a word organic with its necessary content. Today no one thinks of the literature of the Romantic school in representing a lake, a landscape, a character. Slowly but surely, a Dada character is forming.

Dada is here, there and a little everywhere, such as it is, with its faults, with its personal

differences and distinctions which it accepts and views with indifference. We are often told that we are incoherent, but into this word people try to put an insult that it is rather hard for me to fathom. Everything is incoherent. The gentleman who decides to take a bath but goes to the movies instead. The one who wants to be quiet but says things that haven't even entered his head. Another who has a precise idea on some subject but succeeds only in expressing the opposite in words which for him are a poor translation. There is no logic. Only relative necessities discovered **a posteriori**, valid not in any exact sense but only as explanations. The acts of life have no beginning or end. Everything happens in a completely idiotic way. That is why everything is alike. Simplicity is called Dada.

Any attempt to conciliate an inexplicable momentary state with logic strikes me as a boring kind of game. The convention of the spoken language is ample and adequate for us, but for our solitude, for our intimate games and our literature we no longer need it.

The beginnings of Dada were not the beginnings of an art, but of a disgust. Disgust with the magnificence of philosophers who for 3000 years have been explaining everything to us (what for?), disgust with the pretensions of these artists-God's-representatives-on-earth, disgust with passion and with real pathological wickedness where it was not worth the bother; disgust with a false form of domination and restriction **en masse**, that accentuates rather than appeases man's instinct of domination, disgust with all the catalogued categories, with the false prophets who are nothing but a front for the interests of money, pride, disease, disgust with the lieutenants of a mercantile art made to order according to a few infantile laws, disgust with the divorce of good and evil, the beautiful and the ugly (for why is it more estimable to be red rather than green, to the left rather than the right, to be large or small?). Disgust finally with the Jesuitical dialectic which can explain everything and fill people's minds with oblique and obtuse ideas without any physiological basis or ethnic roots, all this by means of blinding artifice and ignoble charlatans promises.

As Dada marches it continuously destroys, not in extension but in itself. From all these disgusts, may I add, it draws no conclusion, no pride, no benefit. It has even stopped combating anything, in the realization that it's no use, that all this doesn't matter. What interests a Dadaist is his own mode of life. But here we approach the great secret.

Dada is a state of mind. That is why it transforms itself according to races and events.

Dada applies itself to everything, and yet it is nothing, it is the point where the yes and the no and all the opposites meet, not solemnly in the castles of human philosophies, but very simply at street corners, like dogs and grasshoppers.

Like everything in life, Dada is useless.

Dada is without pretension, as life should be.

Perhaps you will understand me better when I tell you that Dada is a virgin microbe that penetrates with the insistence of air into all the spaces that reason has not been able to fill with words or conventions.

collab fest 63 - collabyrinth #1 - 01.12.10

collabyrinth #1 organized by warren fry in preparation for the 2011 marginal arts festival

ongoing installation of bill beamer's work (with the addition tonight of a piece by sarah granett)

scribbling and doodling by henry

a package of community garden photographs from scott macleod

exploring the labyrinth of The Metropolitan Community Church of The Blue Ridge

Hakim Bey:

The TAZ is "utopian" in the sense that it envisions an *intensification* of everyday life, or as the Surrealists might have said, life's penetration by the Marvelous. But it cannot be utopian in the actual meaning of the word, *nowhere*, or NoPlace Place. *The TAZ is somewhere*. It lies at the intersection of many forces, like some pagan power- spot at the junction of mysterious ley-lines, visible to the adept in seemingly unrelated bits of terrain, landscape, flows of air, water, animals. But now the lines are not all etched in time and space. Some of them exist only "within" the Web, even though they also intersect with real times and places. Perhaps some of the lines are "non-ordinary" in the sense that no convention for quantifying them exists. These lines might better be studied in the light of chaos science than of sociology, statistics, economics, etc. The patterns of force which bring the TAZ into being have something in common with those chaotic "Strange Attractors" which exist, so to speak, *between* the dimensions.

collab fest 64 - collabyrinth #2 - 01.19.10

at the church, hanging bill beamer's exhibit, part of any part, and arranging a small press library of chapbooks and magazines from don hillia. don ran 3300 press and ex nihilo press

in the late 90s and early 00s. over the past several years he has sent me an archive of materials from the years when he was active with his presses. chapbook authors include: john m. bennett, jake berry, john noto, don hilla, jim leftwich, vincent ferrini, peter ganick, harry polkinhorn, sheila murphy, scott macleod and john high.

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The Digger Papers (August 1968)

The recent death of capitalism has everybody fucked around & confused.

Private enterprise laissez faire legally murderous piracy GONE already buried to be replaced by what?

If it doesn't have a name, how can you talk about it?

|||||||||||

brute salon (brut salon) ((brut saloon))

Is an activity taken on, at times, by those. It can be the latest. Or, as a way of exploring. That being said, bring things. In the things and activities and those: brute salon = brute salon.

Hooray!

Some people said this shit-

Brute Saloon, or what I like to call Festivus de Phosphoric Arte, was such a whistle stop of a misgiving mistrusted domicile where deliverance from protractional ferment was achieved. One is subsumed; the Dionysian element comes to the fore, and it is necessarily a drastically social element into which one disappears even as one forgets that the social dynamic exists. (I threw a water-cooler bottle off a second-storey balcony.) By validating itself to itself (no author), during itself (no product) a collaboration of this kind walks the smoky wilderness outside our conventional understanding of artistic exchange and begins sniffing the trails of ritual, game, and play. In the end there is no unifying goal, no meaningful subject matter to be divined by those participating (and certainly no audience tasked with doing so- in brute salon attendance obliges participation). (warren fry)

collab fest 65 - collabyrinth #3 - 01.26.10

ongoing construction of the small press library

discussion about the upcoming marginal arts festival

i kind of like the noises made by the radiators

first considerations of where and how to display the scores from the mail art call

|||||

Performance Texts: Graphic Scores: Open Scores: Visual Poems: Event Scores: Open Texts: Eternal Network:

FORMAT: Free

TECHNIQUE: Free

SIZE: Free

PARTICIPATION: Open to all

TERMS: No jury, no returns

EXHIBITION: March 3 - 8, 2011, during the Roanoke Marginal Arts Festival. Also a good chance of some

of the scores being performed during the festival. Partial exhibits likely at Collab Fests in the weeks and

months following the festival.

DOCUMENTATION: Photographic documentation online, here and here. Some video also likely.

DEADLINE: February 28, 2011

SEND TO:

Jim Leftwich

525 10th St. S.W.

Roanoke, VA 24016

USA

an excerpt from:

Composition in Retrospect

by John Cage

EACH ACTIVITY IS CENTERED IN ITSELF, I.E., COMPOSITION, PERFORMANCE, AND

LISTENING ARE DIFFERENT ACTIVITIES.

A WORK SHOULD INCLUDE ITS ENVIRONMENT, IS ALWAYS EXPERIMENTAL (UNKNOWN IN ADVANCE).

NO BEGINNING, MIDDLE, OR END (PROCESS, NOT OBJECT).

UNIMPEDEDNESS AND INTERPENETRATION; NO CAUSE AND EFFECT.

ANYTHING CAN FOLLOW ANYTHING ELSE (PROVIDING NOTHING IS TAKEN AS THE BASIS).

INFLUENCE DERIVES FROM ONES OWN WORK (NOT FROM OUTSIDE IT).

ACTIVITY, NOT COMMUNICATION.

THE PRACTICALITY OF CHANGING SOCIETY DERIVES FROM THE POSSIBILITY OF CHANGING THE MIND.

collab fest 66 - collabyrinth #4 - 02.02.11

A microcosm of the chicken concepts disintegrates into the "margin" of implicatattempt, techniques reknowned for climbing; then we must see that they will be split into fifteen bath apprehendures. Your postal inquiry into six forms of tensit-down humor: identials preceeding evermore or everatorder to camouflage, as a prison of the broken order, to be the potential flag of oris and multities. They use what I took for a frame lacking a personal factor.. However, we wing of things to do, to think a potential rapolutionarized, my flag the potential state of *death* polary. As if reading purity in a circle, it seems another poured re-contradictionism, an extrapolation. Divide the purpose of the symbolic into a lack. Furtherence is what poses: "Weren't they disappearing into the 'margin' of object parts whose potential states are yet to be realized?" - from The Elective Affinities

collab fest 67 - collabyrinth #5 - 02.09.11

from A little History of the Mimeograph Revolution, by Steve Clay and Rodney Phillips

There was no more significant poetry anthology in the second half of the twentieth century than The New American Poetry, 1945-1960, edited by Donald M. Allen and published by Grove Press in 1960. Poised almost at mid-century, it provides a summing up of a very particular situation in poetry as it looks back to the achievements of the 1950s and ahead

to the possibilities of the 60s. Allen's anthology was a self-conscious counter to *New Poets of England and America*, edited by Donald Hall, Robert Pack, and Louis Simpson and published by Meridian in 1957. It was to prove prophetic (the two anthologies have not one poet in common) and to serve as both a calling for and a permission to younger writers. The goal, according to Allen, was to present poetry that "has shown one common characteristic: a total rejection of all those qualities typical of academic verse. Following the practice and precepts of Ezra Pound and William Carlos Williams, it has built on their achievements and gone on to evolve new conceptions of the poem. These poets have already created their own tradition, their own press, and their public. They are our avant-garde, the true continuers of the modern movement in American poetry."(1) Allen's anthology was prophetic in another way. It assigned poets to large overall groupings that have persisted for nearly forty years and have entered the critical nomenclature: Black Mountain, San Francisco Renaissance, Beat Generation, and New York Poets -- as well as identifying a group of younger poets "who have been associated with and in some cases influenced by the leading writers of the preceding groups" (p. xiii). Allen was circumspect to a fault concerning his classifications: "Occasionally arbitrary and for the most part more historical than actual, these groups can be justified finally only as a means to give the reader some sense of milieu . . ." (p. xiii).

When the Allen anthology came out, several of the featured poets had barely been published. Of necessity, they existed on the margins, outside mainstream publication and distribution channels. Of necessity, they invented their own communities and audiences (typically indistinguishable), with a small press or little magazine often serving as the nucleus of both.

Direct access to mimeograph machines, letterpress, and inexpensive offset made these publishing ventures possible, putting the means of production in the hands of the poet. In a very real sense, almost anyone could become a publisher. For the price of a few reams of paper and a handful of stencils, a poet could produce, by mimeograph, a magazine or booklet in a small edition over the course of several days. Collating, stapling, and mailing parties helped speed up production, but, more significantly, they helped galvanize a literary group. The existence of independent bookstores meant that it was actually possible to find these publications in all their raw homemade beauty. In several instances (for example, Wallace Berman's *Semina* and LeRoi Jones and Diane di Prima's *The Floating Bear*), the magazines were available only to a mailing list; they were produced for a community of kindred spirits as a literary newsletter -- a quick way to get new work out. And they were the cutting edge of new explorations in and through language. As Ron Loewinsohn noted, "[M]ore important than the quality of their contents was the fact of these magazines' abundance and speed. Having them, we could see what we were doing, as it came, hot off

the griddle. We could get instant response to what we'd written last week, & we could respond instantly to what the guy across town or across the country had written last week."

collab fest 68 - collabyrinth #6 - 02.16.11

'Why is a raven like a writing-desk?'

'Come, we shall have some fun now!' thought Alice. 'I'm glad they've begun asking riddles.--I believe I can guess that,' she added aloud.

'Do you mean that you think you can find out the answer to it?' said the March Hare.

'Exactly so,' said Alice.

'Then you should say what you mean,' the March Hare went on.

'I do,' Alice hastily replied; 'at least--at least I mean what I say--that's the same thing, you know.'

'Not the same thing a bit!' said the Hatter.

'You might just as well say that "I see what I eat" is the same thing as "I eat what I see"!'



Hatter engaging in rhetoric

'You might just as well say,' added the March Hare, 'that "I like what I get" is the same thing as "I get what I like"!'

'You might just as well say,' added the Dormouse, who seemed to be talking in his sleep, 'that "I breathe when I sleep" is the same thing as "I sleep when I breathe"!'

'It *is* the same thing with you,' said the Hatter, and here the conversation dropped, and the party sat silent for a minute, while Alice thought over all she could remember about ravens and writing-desks, which wasn't much.

The Hatter was the first to break the silence. 'What day of the month is it?' he said, turning to Alice: he had taken his watch out of his pocket, and was looking at it uneasily, shaking it every now and then, and holding it to his ear.

Alice considered a little, and then said 'The fourth.'

'Two days wrong!' sighed the Hatter. 'I told you butter wouldn't suit the works!' he added looking angrily at the March Hare.

'It was the *best* butter,' the March Hare meekly replied.

'Yes, but some crumbs must have got in as well,' the Hatter grumbled: 'you shouldn't have put it in with the bread-knife.'

The March Hare took the watch and looked at it gloomily: then he dipped it into his cup of tea, and looked at it again: but he could think of nothing better to say than his first remark, 'It was the *best* butter, you know.'

Alice had been looking over his shoulder with some curiosity. 'What a funny watch!' she remarked. 'It tells the day of the month, and doesn't tell what o'clock it is!'

'Why should it?' muttered the Hatter. 'Does *your* watch tell you what year it is?'

'Of course not,' Alice replied very readily: 'but that's because it stays the same year for such a long time together.'

'Which is just the case with *mine*,' said the Hatter.

Alice felt dreadfully puzzled. The Hatter's remark seemed to have no sort of meaning in it, and yet it was certainly English. 'I don't quite understand you,' she said, as politely as she could.

'The Dormouse is asleep again,' said the Hatter, and he poured a little hot tea upon its nose.

The Dormouse shook its head impatiently, and said, without opening its eyes, 'Of course, of course; just what I was going to remark myself.'

'Have you guessed the riddle yet?' the Hatter said, turning to Alice again.

'No, I give it up,' Alice replied: 'what's the answer?'

'I haven't the slightest idea,' said the Hatter.

'Nor I,' said the March Hare.

Alice sighed wearily. 'I think you might do something better with the time,' she said, 'than waste it in asking riddles that have no answers.'

'If you knew Time as well as I do,' said the Hatter, 'you wouldn't talk about wasting *it*. It's *him*.'

'I don't know what you mean,' said Alice.

'Of course you don't!' the Hatter said, tossing his head contemptuously. 'I dare say you never even spoke to Time!'

'Perhaps not,' Alice cautiously replied: 'but I know I have to beat time when I learn music.'

'Ah! that accounts for it,' said the Hatter. 'He won't stand beating. Now, if you only kept on good terms with him, he'd do almost anything you liked with the clock. For instance, suppose it were nine o'clock in the morning, just time to begin lessons: you'd only have to whisper a hint to Time, and round goes the clock in a twinkling! Half-past one, time for dinner!'

('I only wish it was,' the March Hare said to itself in a whisper.)

'That would be grand, certainly,' said Alice thoughtfully: 'but then--I shouldn't be hungry for it, you know.'

'Not at first, perhaps,' said the Hatter: 'but you could keep it to half-past one as long as you liked.'

'Is that the way *you* manage?' Alice asked.

The Hatter shook his head mournfully. 'Not I!' he replied. 'We quarrelled last March--just before *he* went mad, you know--' (pointing with his tea spoon at the March Hare,) '--it was at the great concert given by the Queen of Hearts, and I had to sing

"Twinkle, twinkle, little bat!

 How I wonder what you're at!"

You know the song, perhaps?'

'I've heard something like it,' said Alice.

'It goes on, you know,' the Hatter continued, 'in this way:--

"Up above the world you fly,

 Like a tea-tray in the sky.

 Twinkle, twinkle--"

Here the Dormouse shook itself, and began singing in its sleep 'Twinkle, twinkle, twinkle, twinkle--' and went on so long that they had to pinch it to make it stop.

collab fest 69 - collabyrinth #7 - 02.23.11

Scott MacLeod <scottmmacleod@gmail.com>

to Jim Leftwich <jimleftwich@gmail.com>

date Fri, Jan 14, 2011 at 10:44 AM

This essay investigates whether or not we should think that the things we say are identical to the things our sentences mean. It is argued that these theoretical notions should be distinguish, since assertoric content does not respect the compositionality principle. As a paradigmatic example, Kaplan's formal language LD is shown to exemplify a failure of compositionality. It is demonstrated that by respecting the theoretical distinction between the objects of assertion and compositional values certain conflicts between compositionality and contextualism are avoided. This includes the conflict between eternalism and the semantics of tense, the embedding problems for contextualism about epistemic modals and taste claims, and the conflict between direct reference and the semantics of bound pronouns (and monstrous

operators). After presenting the theoretical picture which distinguishes assertoric content from compositional semantic value, some objections to the picture are addressed. In so doing, the objection from King (2003) stemming from apparent complications with the interaction of temporal expressions and attitude reports is assessed and shown to be non-threatening.

collab fest 70 - collabyrinth #8 - 03.02.11

Vittore Baroni:

Mail Art Congress 1986 + 6 =

Decentralized World Wide Networker Congress 1992 + 6 =

Incongruous Meetings 1998 + 6 =

Obscure Actions 2004 + 6 =

ART DETOX 2010

a year of artistic detoxification

do you feel oppressed by too many art invites and projects?
tired of being burdened and clogged by bad art toxins?

every time two or more artists meet in 2010 to discuss and promote a therapeutic ecology of art, you have a session of ART DETOX

(CJK) 1992 was the year of the World-Wide Decentralized Networker Congress, otherwise known as METANET, or NC92. The Networker Congresses were first proposed by Swiss conceptual artist H.R. Fricker in "Mail Art: A Process of Detachment," a text presented in March 1990 for my book *Eternal Network: A Mail Art Anthology* (to be published in Dec. 1993 by University of Calgary Press). In early 1991 Fricker met with fellow Swiss artist Peter W. Kaufmann and together they drafted an invitational flyer entitled, Decentralized World-Wide Networker Congress 1992. The congress call went out to anybody, "Wherever two or more artists/networkers meet in the course of 1992, there a congress will take place." The Networker Congresses, like the Mail Art Congresses of 1986, grew into a huge forum of 180 congresses in over twenty countries.

(KE) Sounds like an enormous project. How was it organized?

(CJK) H.R. Fricker and Peter W. Kaufmann sought active, creative input from networker artists on six continents. American artists Lloyd Dunn, Steve Perkins, John Held Jr., Mark

Corroto, and I joined Fricker and Kaufmann early (summer 1991) in the development of the NC92 concept and served as active "netlink facilitators." Final drafts of the Networker Congress invitations included netlink contacts from Africa, South America, North America, Asia, Europe and Australia.

(KE) Is it fair to assume that the networker artist has grown out of the mail art phenomenon?

(CJK) I think so. The Networker Congresses were based on the acknowledgment that a new form of artist, the networker, was emerging from international network cultures of the alternative press, mail art community, telematic artists, flyposter artists, cyberpunks, cassette bands, rubberstampers and stamp artists. The year-long collective work by networkers of NC92 represents the first major effort among artists to cross-over and introduce diverse underground networks to each other. Until this moment countless marginal networks, often operating in parallel directions, were unaware of one another. Mail artists that network have a sense of what intermedia and interactivity involve--it's a consciousness which branches outward. One could say that mail art's evolution was based upon intermedia--the mailstream merging of zines, artist stamps, rubberstamping, correspondence, sound sculpting with audio cassettes, visual poetry, and artists' books. Communication concepts have been the medium and message that mail artists use to bind together these divergent forms of expression.

Sztuka Fabryka: encyclopaedia

A congress of Mail-artists is defined as one or several meetings organised and held during for one particular year, called a 'Congress year'.

In the nineteen eighties Günther Ruch (Switzerland) began promoting his long held idea of a centralised congress of Mail-artists. Initially, he proposed a one-time gathering, however, when Hans Ruedi Fricker (Switzerland) joined the project they agreed, on a decentralised version to be held in several locations. They realised that if they did not decentralise the gathering, few people would have the opportunity to participate due to the former iron curtain, long travel distances, or not much money. Each agreed that decentralized congresses were ideal and would give more artists the opportunity to confer face-to-face.

Both also had their own personal ideas about going from postal contact to meeting in person, so decentralizing was the inevitable step for giving more Mail-artists the possibility of meeting each other.

In 1986 they organised the first 'Decentralized Mail-Art Congress' (DMAC86) which involved eighty different meetings with over five hundred participants from twenty five countries. Ruch acted as co-ordinator and gathered photos and reports from the various meetings in a 160 page catalogue. Six years later in 1992, Fricker co-ordinated a new 'Decentralized Networker Congress' (DNC92) with a final count of over 250 meetings and a book-documentation produced by Peter W. Kaufmann (Switzerland). Fricker called it a "networker" congress as he tried opening the meetings to other independent networks and sub-cultures such as home-tape, graffiti, zine publishers, ... who are not directly related to the Mail-Art network.

Vittore Baroni (Italy) strongly felt that it would be a great loss to the international Mail-Art community if no one promoted another 'Congress year'. A tradition was born six years later when Baroni conceived and developed a six-year cycle by initiating the 'Incongruous Meetings 1998' (IM98). Baroni acted as central co-ordinator and over that year collected and distributed plans and proposals to the network by e-mail and postal mail. Baroni's intention was to inspire someone to organise more congress years in the future.

... why not make it a little different every time? That's why I organized in 1998 a year of Incongruous (Decentralized) Meetings: to go forward to something new (after the "Mail Art" Decentralized Congresses of 86 and the "Networker" Decentralized Congresses of 92) while going back at the same time to the roots of mail art (the "Meetings" idea of Ray Johnson and his NY Correspondence School). (Vittore Baroni, personal interview, September 2003)

The congresses were also an important part in the development of the Mail-Art networking. Festivals, events, exhibitions give opportunities to meet other Mail-artists and make it something different than just an exchange at distance. The focus of Mail-Art was never specifically on the postal system; rather, it was on the transfer of aesthetic communication, co-operation and creativity which can also be expressed through personal interaction.

The congresses developed into series of open meetings with the same theme, freely organised by various networkers in different parts of the world, in the course of one year. The congress is a search for open relation systems, for the interchange and co-operation in art and Mail-Art as well as in other culture institutions on a communal, regional and international level development.

For the three 'Congress Years', a networker or a group acted as a coordination centre. Local event organisers sent out invitations prior to the event and afterward sent a report of the results to the coordination centre. During 1992 and 1998 some concept meetings were also held. These did not take place face-to-face in real spaces between real persons, but electronically such as e-mail, internet, fax and even through thought such as telepathy.

Regarding 1992, over two thousand congress items, mostly from that year, have been catalogued by Chuck Welch (U.S.A.) aka. Cracker Jack Kid in the 'Networker Databank collection,' in his 'Eternal Network Archive.' He also donated them to the 'University of Iowa' for its 'Alternative traditions in the Contemporary Art Archive'.

Guy Bleus (Belgium) formulates that "the" Mail-Art network does not exist, instead, the Mail-Art network is a collection of overlapping networks, a network of networks. A Congress year is a perfect reflection of the Mail-Art network and its networks. Each congress reflects a part of the network in which the organiser and the participants flourish. The centres of the decentralised congresses are always different and each Mail-artist is at the centre of the whole network. A congress year is a congress of congresses.

In the Mail-Art network you may wonder if meeting a correspondent personally after a long acquaintance through the post is a positive event or even if it is a logical step at all? Some Mail-artists prefer otherwise.

"... I would not call it a "logic step" in mail art (it's probably just an "inevitable step"): when you meet, it is no more "mail art", regardless to the fact that you do cooperate "live" on a performance or creative work or you just sip tea and chat, it's a totally different kind of experience." Janssen, R. (1995). [Interview with Vittore Baroni]. *TAM Mail-Interview Project* [WWW page]. URL <http://www.iuoma.org/>

During congresses, discussions were organised focussed on Mail-Art themes. Through decentralisation of the congresses, the organisers can propose their own themes for discussion. Networkers from South America, Australia, Europe or from behind the former iron curtain have different problems and matters which they want to explore. Two examples of constantly returning concerns are: the "Future of Mail-Art" and "Mail-Art and money don't mix". The latter was influenced by the writings of Lon Spiegelman (U.S.A.) and was presented in several congresses in 1986.

Baroni's idea to have every sixth year a 'Networker congress' started to become reality as Peter Küstermann (Germany) held the 'Netmail Congress' at Minden in April 2004. Sztuka Fabryka initiated another yearly 'Independent Arts Festival' and Piermario Ciani (Italy), a 'FUN of FUN' convention of the 'Funtastic United Nations'. Baroni noticed that the 2004 'Congress Year' was the first not co-ordinated by networkers as before but was the result of a mixture of different projects and approaches, crossings and overlappings.

Networking art had become internationally recognized and widely collected through internet and other art galleries. The term Mail Art had also been entered into art dictionaries and in 2003 became part of the prestigious Biennale of Venice. Because Mail-Art had become so well accepted, Baroni felt the need to retire into obscurity again. Baroni stated his desire to leave these congress rooms and crowded museum halls to explore the darker side of the ethereal urge and he invited networkers to join a campaign in 2004 for 'A year of Obscure Actions'.

collab fest 71 - collabyrinth #9 - 03.16.11

There are no photographs for this event.

from an interview with Brian Counihan

Are there other models nationwide or international that you worked from to create this festival?

It was very important from the start that Marginal Art Festival not try to reproduce any other model. The festival was created by first looking at our own communities' cultural assets and deficiencies and then grew from the collaboration of individuals who wished to improve our cities cultural offerings by filling those gaps. That being said, everyone involved has other models that they refer to and examine. One of the most important group that helped define the festival were the underground and avant art forms of Mail Art, Visual Poetry, the Absurdists, Dadaists and Fluxists. Each of those groups has national and international events that they actively participate in and some refer to as "The Network."

What is the benefit to a community, not just the arts community, to have a festival like this one?

Our small city has struggled over the past decades with population loss, and an economic downturn that has affected local identity and led to the imposition of a generic consumer driven cultural identity. Several years ago city officials decided to use the arts to act as the engine for the city's economic revival. There is a great deal evidence that shows that many cities around the country and the world have succeed in revitalizing their communities in this way. This sort of official support for the arts must realistically come with an impatience for results, and many of the artists and cultural advocates were not convinced that the entrenched and institutionalized cultural offerings would be enough to affect that turn around.

It is impossible to tell how this festival will benefit the whole community. We hope it will strengthen local identity, encourage more individual participation in civic issues, and perhaps even add to the local economy.

collab fest 72 - collabyrinth #10 - 03.23.11

There are no photographs for this event.

Fluxus has a new manifesto: What changes?

Fluxus has a new manifesto. What does this change?

1. **The New Manifesto Changes nothing:**
2. George Maciunas, Dick Higgins, and Ken Friedman did a very good job of defining Fluxus and describing what it is. Fluxus does not need anybody to do redo the excellent work already done in this regard. The Four Principles that I enumerated much later are NOT a new definition. I wrote them as a response to a need that I identified for a quick and simple description of what Fluxus is, for those (frequent) occasions when people without previous experience or exposure to Fluxus request an explanation. I think that I succeeded, and that the four principles provide a reasonable explanation that should satisfy any casual inquiry, while still remaining true to the intentions of the more sophisticated explanations. If there is ever a conflict between one of the Four Principles and a historically or technically more accurate example, the historical truth must prevail.
3. **The New Manifesto Changes Everything:**
4. Contemporary Fluxus artists have thrown off the last yokes of dependency on the old generation of Fluxus insiders. The contemporary artists know that they are Fluxus artists and do not need to ask for permission or even opinions as to their status as Fluxus artists.
- 5.
6. Artists were doing Fluxus before Fluxus was even named. In the 1960s and 1970s a group of artists centered themselves around George Maciunas and called themselves and their work Fluxus. After Maciunas's death some of these artists continued making Fluxus works and others dispersed or followed new ideas. Over the years new artists began working with Fluxus ideas and creating new Fluxus works. Some of the original Fluxus group thought this was exciting and interesting. Some of the original Fluxus group, along with parts of the commercial art market that dealt with Fluxus as commodities whose value was dependent on perceived scarcity, found this development threatening. The newer artists were confused by this schism as they attempted to assert their own identities as Fluxus artists while seeking the guidance and respect of the remaining original Fluxus artists.
- 7.
8. It became clear to the new Fluxus artists that certain parts of the old and established Fluxus community were never going to accept them as anything other than a group of child-like appendages whose role must be limited to the promotion and

celebration only of the work done by themselves. This state of affairs was not acceptable to a group of autonomous artists who saw (and see) themselves as a continuation of Fluxus, not as a subsidiary appendage.

The Fluxus Manifesto for the 21st Century asserts that contemporary Fluxus artists are proud of their Fluxus heritage, are continuing to celebrate the work and achievements of the Fluxus artists who came before them, but are no longer dependent upon them for support or for opinions on their legitimacy or perceived lack thereof.

Fluxus lives and we are Fluxus!

21 March 11 - 12:59

FLUXUS MANIFESTO FOR THE 21st CENTURY

Allan Revich, March 21, 2011

Once again a subset of The Fluxus Establishment (as if there could be such a thing as a Fluxus establishment!) have got their knickers in knots about the idea of new artists calling themselves Fluxus and/or calling their activities Fluxus. This has happened before. It might happen again. But I doubt it.

Today's Fluxus artists continue to respect the work and legacy of Fluxus 1.0, but we no longer feel that there is a requirement for acceptance by the remaining vestiges of that generation. It is no longer a matter of whether or not THEY accept US. The 21st Century Fluxboat has already left the dock. We would love to have the original group of Fluxus artists on board with us. In fact it would be an honor. But the boat is sailing, and it's not going to wait at the dock any longer. Those who don't jump on board will simply be left behind.

There are no more questions for the new Fluxus artists to answer. We ARE Fluxus. We welcome the support of those who preceded us, but we don't need their approval. The only remaining question for those of the original generation of Fluxus is, "Do you want to be on the boat, or do you want to be left behind on the dock?" We have room for you. We will welcome you with open arms. We will give you all of the respect and admiration that you deserve. But we will not wait for you.

This is what Fluxus is today. It is pretty much the same as what Fluxus was, but the old actors have been replaced by new ones. And behind our generation Fluxus artists there is already a new generation ready to displace us. We welcome them.

FLUXUS TODAY:

Fluxus today is built on the solid foundations of Fluxus yesterday. The artists may be new, but the work they are making is as much a part of Fluxus tradition as the work that came before. Here is what Ken Friedman wrote in 2002. A version of his essay was first published in 1989 by the Emily Harvey Gallery as "Fluxus and Company".

...Emmett Williams once wrote, "Fluxus is what Fluxus does - but no one knows whodunit." This concise description makes two radical statements. The statement that no one knows "who done" Fluxus rejects the idea of Fluxus as a specific group of people. It identifies Fluxus with a frame of action and defines Fluxus as a cumulative, aggregate of Fluxus activities over the past forty years or so. While Emmett is famous for playful conundrums, he may not agree with this reading of his text. Dick Higgins did. Dick explicitly rejected a notion that limited Fluxus to a specific group of people who came together at a specific time and place. Dick wrote, "Fluxus is not a moment in history, or an art movement. Fluxus is a way of doing things, a tradition, and a way of life and death."

For Dick, for George Maciunas, and for me, Fluxus is more valuable as an idea and a potential for social change than as a specific group of people or a collection of objects. We, the Fluxus artists of the 21st century have taken these words to heart. We are Fluxus and we are making Fluxus work. Friedman, building on previous work by Dick Higgins, described Fluxus as a "*laboratory characterized by twelve ideas*".

1. *globalism,*
2. *the unity of art and life,*
3. *intermedia,*
4. *experimentalism,*
5. *chance,*
6. *playfulness,*
7. *simplicity,*
8. *implicativeness,*
9. *exemplativism,*
10. *specificity,*
11. *presence in time, and*
12. *musicality*

We live and work under the umbrella of these twelve ideas.

FOUR FLUXUS PRINCIPLES

I have used ideas from Friedman, Owen Smith, Maciuanas, and Higgins, along with direct observation of Fluxus work past and present, to create an even more concise set of Four Fluxus Principles:

1. Fluxus is an attitude. It is not a movement or a style.
2. Fluxus is intermedia. Fluxus creators like to see what happens when different media intersect. They use found and everyday objects, sounds, images, and texts to create new combinations of objects, sounds, images, and texts.
3. Fluxus works are simple. The art is small, the texts are short, and the performances are brief.
4. Fluxus should be fun. Humor has always been an important element in Fluxus.

As with Friedman's 12 ideas, my four principles are flexible guidelines, not commandments carved in stone. They are meant to help people understand and work with Fluxus, not to confine them or restrain their creativity.

We, the Fluxus artists of the 21st century, know that we owe George Maciunas, Dick Higgins, Ken Friedman, and all of the original Fluxus artists a debt of gratitude for building the ship that we are now sailing on. Anyone, anywhere, is welcome aboard. Just remember that the ship has already started to sail.

Allan Revich

March 21, 2011

20 March 11 - 19:27

Who is a Fluxus Artist?

Fluxfest New York 2011 is coming soon to New York City. April 11 through April 17, 2011. Some venues have been secured, some are being negotiated, and one appears to have backed out. It's hard for me to understand why a venue that has a strong history of supporting Fluxus would withdraw support from a Fluxfest, but from what I understand, this particular space was more comfortable hosting reproductions of old historical Fluxus works than in supporting the work of newer and emerging Fluxus artists. Why would this be? As new artists see the possibilities of working within the Fluxus milieu there has been an incredible renaissance of Fluxus works and performances. New scores are being written. New artworks and texts are being created, and new artists are celebrating the accomplishments and legacies of the earlier generation of Fluxus artists. Many people who have been associated with Fluxus over the last 50 years have shown themselves to be very excited about the new Fluxus awakening. Artists and works that were on the verge of fading into oblivion are suddenly in the forefront of consciousness of the arts community. Apparently the new Fluxus phenomenon is not universally being welcomed by all though. Is Fluxus dead or is it alive? Was it a movement, and idea, or is it an attitude? Who were the Fluxus artists? Who can claim to be a Fluxus artist?

I think that there are two basic and long-standing definitions of what Fluxus is, and that is

what complicates answering the question, "who is a Fluxus artist?"

1) The Silverman Collection Fluxus: Fluxus as defined by collectors, and historians with powerful vested interests in confining Fluxus to specific times and places. They prefer a tight and tidy definition, generally around the idea that Fluxus began with George Maciunas, and it ended when he died. George died, the circle dispersed. Fluxus ended.

2) The "Fluxus Attitude" as described by Owen Smith, and the Fluxus Idea as described by Dick Higgins and Ken Friedman: Dick and Ken collaborated on the **12 Fluxus ideas**. In fact, these are Ken's own words,

Dick explicitly rejected a notion that limited Fluxus to a specific group of people who came together at a specific time and place. Dick wrote, "Fluxus is not a moment in history, or an art movement. Fluxus is a way of doing things, a tradition, and a way of life and death." For Dick, for George Maciunas, and for me, Fluxus is more valuable as an idea and a potential for social change than as a specific group of people or a collection of objects. As I see it, Fluxus was a laboratory. The research program of the Fluxus laboratory is characterized by twelve ideas: globalism,

1. the unity of art and life,
2. intermedia,
3. experimentalism,
4. chance,
5. playfulness,
6. simplicity,
7. implicativeness,
8. exemplativism,
9. specificity,
10. presence in time, and
11. musicality.

My own 4 point summary is derived from a combination of this idea and of Owen Smith's idea of Fluxus as an Attitude, along with examples of the actual work produced and held out to be Fluxus work by Fluxus artists, to wit:

1. Fluxus is an attitude. It is not a movement or a style.
2. Fluxus is intermedia. Fluxus creators like to see what happens when different media intersect. They use found and everyday objects, sounds, images, and texts to create new combinations of objects, sounds, images, and texts.
3. Fluxus works are simple. The art is small, the texts are short, and the performances are brief.
4. Fluxus should be fun. Humor has always been an important element in Fluxus.

I'll leave this post with a few more words from Forty Years of Fluxus:

"...The first Fluxus disappeared a long time ago. It replaced itself with the many forms of Fluxus that came after.

The many varieties of Fluxus activity took on their own life and had a significant history of their own. It's unrealistic and historically inaccurate to imagine a Fluxus controlled by one man. Fluxus was co-created by many people and it has undergone a continuous process of co-creation and renewal for three decades."

And, so it goes. Fluxus ended for one group of artists and continues forward in the capable and spirited hands new generations of Fluxus artists.

Hello, my name is Allan Revich, and I am a Fluxus Artist.

15 February 11 - 14:31

The Fluxus Community Today (© Cecil Touchon)

The Fluxus Community Today

Fluxus, since many people still have never even heard of it, continues to have the ability to surprise. But the advantage is, most people have been influenced by the ideas or have experienced Fluxus even though they don't realize it. There is more subconscious precedent in the back of people's minds today than there used to be in the past which provides resonance and people have the ability to connect with it even if they are not sure why. So there is often an almost guilty recognition among some that they 'love this kind of stuff' even if there is something of a disconnect. For artists this disconnect comes from the belief that Fluxus is a historical event – a closed circle - that is long over and do not realize that it continues to live and grow through the present generation of practitioners and that they could be a part of it in the present if they feel the connection.

Regardless of what Fluxus ever was or is now or shall be in the future, it is first and foremost a community of people who communicate and work with each other in the context of Fluxus – of Fluxus as an attitude, as a tradition, as a trajectory, as a point of view. Fluxus has always been experimental and has always challenged boundaries – famously, the boundaries between high and low art or the boundaries between one medium and another and ultimately the perceived boundaries between art and life.

Therefore, it should be no surprise that Fluxus artists do not recognize any boundary between the past and the present or between insiders and outsiders. The Fluxus community today is a self organizing, porous organization. Membership in this community is based on interacting with other members of the community and participating in group

projects. The more one participates, the more of a core member one becomes. It is that simple. It is a matter of interconnectedness. That is what makes any community.

If virtually anyone could become a part of the Fluxus community, and anyone can, then the question might then arise, "But is what all of these people are doing really Fluxus?" That seems like a good question. It could be suggested that the recognition of what is Fluxus would need to emerge from the activities of the members of this community and the ensuing dialog around those activities. As a group dedicated to Fluxus, it is inevitable that certain things will come to be regarded as Fluxus and many other things will not. It is really a matter of consensus within the group. If the group remains open and experimental then what is Fluxus amid what they are doing will be recognized and favored as such – everything else will not be. Since Fluxus is open by nature, new ideas can and will emerge, these new ideas will find their way into the canon of Fluxus if they are in accord with the general nature of Fluxus as accepted by the community thus allowing for change and transformation which are, in themselves inherently Fluxus.

During the founder's time, George Maciunas was the 'chairman', the man in charge of deciding what was Fluxus and what wasn't and he often changed his mind. In his absence, the Fluxus community is not restricted by the limitations of a single individual's vision. As an experimental idea Fluxus at its core, is democratic by nature rather than hierarchical. When looking at the definition for hierarchy there is a relevant quote: "it has been said that only a hierarchical society with a leisure class at the top can produce works of art". It could be said that Fluxus challenges that view in that works of art can be made by anyone in any society depending on how one defines what constitutes works of art.

In Fluxus, power is no longer invested in a single individual or small group of insiders deciding what or who is or isn't Fluxus. The power is, rather, invested in the community. Each individual in the community is in charge of his own domain and responsible for his own place in the network without approval from any 'superior'. This is cleverly alluded to in a recent work by Keith Buchholz who, using a well known Maciunas work: NO SMOKING, removed the 'S' making a new work: NO MO KING meaning 'no more king'.

Fluxus today, equipped with the examples set by Maciunas and the other seminal members, has the capacity to grow and expand according to the 'Laws of Fluxus' established through precedence rather than the decrees and judgments of an individual authority. Are you a member of the Fluxus community? You ought to be.



performance of Phillip Corner's Piano Activities, 1962,
during the 2011 Roanoke Marginal Arts Festival

collab fest 73 - 03.30.11

from the Sztuka Fabryka Encyclopaedia

The 'Eternal Network' is the concept of an ongoing, global artistic network in which each participating artist realises that s/he is part of a wider network. It is a model of creative activity with no borders between artist and audience, with both working on a common creation. The concept of an 'Eternal Network' originated with the poets and Fluxus artists Robert Filliou (France), who died in 1987, and George Brecht (U.S.A.). They introduced the idea of the 'Eternal Network' in April 1968 on a poster and mailed it to their correspondents. This was the first mention of a model of an international network of artists working together by communication.

The ideas of Filliou and Brecht find their origin in a time when experimental art began to flourish. The ideas of Marcel Duchamp (France) re-emerged, and avant-garde art groups such as Fluxus and Nouveaux Réalistes appeared. Daniel Spoerri (Romania) introduced Filliou to the arts after they met in Paris. As was common in the experimental arts of the

sixties, also for Filliou technique was important only as a means to realise ideas and concepts. For Filliou, art is a "permanent creation" and entirely embedded in and inseparable from daily life. Art is one part of the society, as the world is one fragment of the universe, and the universe itself a product of a permanent creation. Art is direct action in the world, in the same sense that religion is only possible in its practice - creating art is art, finishing it is not, and exhibiting it is anti-art.

The idea of a "birthday" for Art grew out of this philosophy of "permanent creation". In 1963 Filliou declared January the 17th as 'Art's Birthday'. According to Filliou, it was exactly one million years ago on that date that Art was born when someone dropped a dry sponge into a bucket of water. Filliou's declaration of 'Art's Birthdau' fits into the Fluxus tradition of absurdum and humour. Even today artists all over the world connect, usually through the internet or at actual parties and exchange-art events, on this date to keep alive the concept of the 'Eternal Network'. The only condition is that each group having a birthday party send and receive birthday presents for Art.

"Filliou proposed a public holiday to celebrate the presence of art in our lives. In recent years, the idea has been taken up by a loose network of artists and friends around the world. Each year the Eternal Network evolves to include new partners - working with the ideas of exchange and telecommunications-art. Artists have celebrated Art's Birthday with lavish parties and gatherings, correspondence and mailart, and through Telematic networks using SloScan TV, Videophones, music composed for telephone lines, modem-to-modem MIDI connections, early bulletin board and chat systems, and (starting in the mid 1990's) the Internet." Art's Birthday.Net. (n.d.). *Art's Birthday* [WWW page] URL <http://artsbirthday.net/>

From 1965 through 1968, Brecht and Filliou had a shop, the 'Cédille qui Sourit', located in a small fishing village in the South of France. The shop, never registered with the chambers of commerce, was open only upon request, and was the centre for their international creativity. Here they created and manufactured objects and poems, all according to the philosophy of "permanent creation", and sold them by correspondence. In 1968, as a result of the closing of the shop and the imminent departure of Brecht back to the United States, they came up with the concept of the 'Fête Permanente' or 'Eternal Network'.

The 'Eternal Network' seeks to close the gap between artists and non-artists by encouraging collaborations together on common creations. Brecht and Filliou's vision of collaboration, established in their shop, should continue, now disconnected from an actual space. As other artists were invited to participate in the late Sixties and early Seventies, the 'Eternal Network' idea found its form in the Mail-Art network, the postal system being the primary long distance communication form of that era.

"In a few short years this idea would find fertile ground in an emerging and geographically dispersed network of self-identified correspondence artists. Rejecting the exclusiveness and competitiveness of existing art world institutions in favour of open and collaborative

exchanges via the postal system, a community of participants slowly established themselves as a parallel counter-institution during the late 1960s and early 1970s. It is for these reasons that correspondence art, also known as mail art or postal art, has often been referred to by its practitioners, as the Eternal Network." Perkins, S. (n.d.). *Utopian Networks and Correspondence Identities*. [WWW page] URLhttp://sdrc.lib.uiowa.edu/atca/subjugated/two_5.htm

Since the Mail-Art network is true to Filliou and Brecht's concept of a network in which common creation through communication is more important than the resulting piece of art, many Mail-artists refer to Mail-Art as the 'Eternal Network'. For example, Chuck Welch (U.S.A.) named his book, the first publication about Mail-Art *Eternal Network: A Mail Art Anthology*. The 'Fluxus Bucks' of Julie Jefferies aka. Ex Posto Facto (U.S.A.) bear the heading "United Eternal Network", with the instruction to modify the 'Fluxus Bucks', and then return it or pass it on in the Mail-Art network.



George Brecht with Robert Filliou at La Cédille qui sourit, rue des May, Villefranche-sur-mer, 1965-1968.



George Brecht and Robert Filliou, La Cedellie qui Sourit, Villefranche-sur-Mer

|||||

from Jim Leftwich jimleftwich@gmail.com
to jim leftwich <jimleftwich@gmail.com>
date Sat, Apr 2, 2011 at 11:43 AM
subject labyrinth
mailed-by gmail.com
hide details Apr 2

Ariadne Unemployed

Unattributed

Potlatch #9-11 17-31 August 1954

At one sole glance, one can discern both the Cartesian layout of the so-called labyrinth at the Botanical Gardens and the following warning sign:

NO PLAYING IN THE LABYRINTH

There could be no more succinct summary of the spirit of this entire civilization. The very one that we will, in the end, bring down.

Collab Fest 74 - 04.07.11

there are no photographs for this event.

we got together at my house to discuss renting a space for events and exhibits.

First & Kirk Sample Lease

Reply

Warren Fry to me, Aaron, Ralph, Matt, Olchar

show details Apr 4 (10 days ago)

Yo,

Here is the email (attached with lease and rules) that Wayne Firebaugh sent me today. I will be taking a closer look at the paper work tonight. I thought our walk through yesterday at 2:00 went really well and Wayne was very enthusiastic, courteous, and informative.

Jim and Aaron,

Here are some of the things that came up (Olchar, Ralph and Matt were also at the walk-through and can fill in gaps).

The space we looked at is on the 2nd floor of 302 1st St. SW at the intersection of Kirk Ave. It is incredibly large (I don't recall actual square footage... imagine two pinched and elongated Waterheater sized spaces) with tall ceilings and windows, wood floors, and two stairway entrances. What we would be renting however, at roughly 1.25\$ per square foot, would be a section of this large area. Dickie was technically renting a 20' by 20' area which meant he was paying 400\$. He used a lot more space than that however, spreading himself out all over the entire floor, much to Wayne's chagrin. Wayne seems totally fine with us using more space for shows, performances, and bands, on a semi-weekly basis if we follow the rules and don't leave anything in the 'overflow' space. This means we could utilize the area we are 'actually' renting for tables, a zine-library, exhibition space etc. and use the larger area as needed.

Eventually Wayne wants to convert the 2nd floor into apartments. There are also some renovations, like stripping the lattice work ceiling etc., for which we might have to temporarily relocate to the 1st floor. It seems like these renovation would be more than a year off and wouldn't take to long.

There is no smoking anywhere in the building but alcohol is OK as long as we're not selling it (especially to under age ravers). There is no heating. During the winter we'd have to provide our own space heaters. Based on the location noise may not be a problem, there are no apartments connected to the building.

He is asking us for 500 instead of 400 though. He said that the electric costs (which the tenant doesn't have to pay) were killing him when Dickie was in the space. I'm hoping the price is negotiable and we can get it widdled down. Ideas?

Jim and Aaron? Would you guys like to see the space at some point? If so, when would work for you?

anti and out!

Warren

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Wayne Firebaugh <wayne@waynefirebaugh.com>
Date: Mon, Apr 4, 2011 at 10:39 AM
Subject: First & Kirk Sample Lease
To: Warren Fry <warrencfry@gmail.com>
Cc: Richard Sheridan <rpsheridan@cox.net>

Warren

It was nice to meet you and your friends yesterday. Here is the sample lease that we discussed. Note that I am also sending the "building rules" which are attached to the executed lease. I quoted a lease rate of \$500 based upon my understanding of your anticipated use of the space. Please confirm receipt and let me know of your questions and intentions at your earliest convenience.

Regards,
J. Wayne Firebaugh, Jr.

wayne@waynefirebaugh.com

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Matt Ames to Warren, me, Aaron, Ralph, Olchar

show details Apr 5 (9 days ago)

The lease agreements seem like pretty standard fare.

My thoughts at the moment:

That space is great: It's spacious, the location is perfect and those windows and trees are beautiful.

I think we're all pretty much on the same page in terms of what we'd like to do there:

Collaborative work, performances, visual art shows, library, office...and so on.

I also imagine having a nice place to nap on a couch if it's 4pm and I don't feel like walking home.

We can do some wonderful things downtown.

My only concern is money: Right now \$100 is probably too steep for me-\$60 would probably suck a bit but I could do that. Maybe we could figure out some way down the road to make it pay for itself.

Also, Warren & Olchar-did you get a sense of how much moving between buildings we'd have to do while they work on things and do you see this as a problem or minor inconvenience?

What are people thinking at this point? Should we meet? Come up with a plan-a counter offer? Find one or two other investors?

From: Warren Fry [mailto:warrencfry@gmail.com]

Sent: Monday, April 04, 2011 3:38 PM

To: Jim Leftwich; Aaron Bensen; Ralph Eaton; Matt Ames; Olchar Lindsann
Subject: Fwd: First & Kirk Sample Lease

Ralph Eaton to Matt, Warren, me, Aaron, Olchar
show details Apr 5 (9 days ago)

I just traded emails with Rhonda Morgan, Director of the Arts Council, regarding cheap downtown space, & she said that she would look into what's available & get back to me soon.

Ralph

Jim Leftwich to Ralph, Matt, Warren, Aaron, Olchar
show details Apr 5 (9 days ago)

i agree with matt. \$100 is more than we can handle. \$60 seems about right. the location is attractive. i'll be interested in hearing about any further developments.

jim

Warren Fry to Matt, me, Aaron, Ralph, Olchar
show details Apr 5 (8 days ago)

Ralph, Thanks for getting in touch with Rhonda. It will be interesting to see if there are any other opportunities.

100\$ is a lot and I would be barely scraping by to pay that as well; probably end up working a part-time job to compensate. The qualities of the place (especially its location and condition) are really exciting however.

per Matt's questions,

The sense I got of 'having to move around' is that it wouldn't be often, we would have warning, and hopefully it wouldn't be for very long... that being said it still might be an inconvenience. Of course, Wayne seems very reasonable. I think that finding ways to produce a little cash would be great but I'm not sure how we would do that. I'm open to the idea of other investors but not sure who would be a good fit.

I think gathering together to discuss it is the best idea. I'm open to having people over to my place tomorrow night if anyone's interested, to collabfest or discuss or just hang out. 7ish is good.

best,

Warren C. Fry

Olchar Lindsann to Warren, Matt, me, Aaron, Ralph
show details Apr 6 (8 days ago)

I'm in the same boat as everyone else--everything seems nearly perfect but \$100 is the absolute most I could scrape together, and even that is very unwise.

I think we wouldn't need to keep a whole lot in the space--a bookshelf, table, a few chairs--so having to move around some probably wouldn't be a huge problem; it would be downstairs or next door so people wouldn't get lost looking for it.

We could pass around a hat for suggested donations at events where it seems appropriate (not for a collab fest, but \$5-if-you-got-it for an hour of live comedy or a set of performances seems reasonable) which could offset the cost if we're doing quite a bit of stuff; though it's still not dependable. And if there are touring performers, donations would really need to go straight to them.

We could look for other people but I'm very hesitant; the group of us I think are all enough on the same page to work informally together and make consensus decisions, when you get to a size or make-up where not everyone is fully familiar with each other and their relation to the project, or where decisions need to be proposed/argue/put to votes etc. I've observe that trouble is sure to follow; and I've been thinking without success of anybody else who it seems natural to be involved in this capacity. I worry that anybody we find now would be a third (er, sixth) wheel which is not a good condition for collaboration that involves money. But, I'm open to discussion if there are people I haven't thought of.

Thanks for looking into other spaces, Ralph! I talked to Brian briefly Monday, he's also very enthusiastic about the idea of our having a performance space and will probably be keeping an ear open for opportunities as well...

Getting together would be good, as usual though I couldn't make it until closer to 9:30 tonight. Text me if we end up doing that...

olchar

--

<http://monoclelash.wordpress.com/>
<http://emanationsoftheyellowsign.tumblr.com/>

<http://bouzingo.blogspot.com/>
<http://olindsann.blogspot.com/>

"Conquerors, revolutions, will never make anything else but philology. The end and the beginning of all things is grammar."

--Petrus Borel, 'Reveries Ethnologiques ', c. 1845.

"His verses are beneath him, and do not contain him. From his efforts quite a false idea of his personality would be gathered; his real poem is himself, and I do not know that he will ever write another."

--Théophile Gautier, Mlle. de Maupin, 1836.

"This is again a hieroglyph of 'Love is the law, love under will'. Every form of energy must be directed, must be applied with integrity, to the full satisfaction of its destiny."

--Aleister Crowley, The Book of Thoth, 1944.

'And, drunk with my folly, I screamed at him furiously: 'Make life beautiful! Make life beautiful!'

-Charles Baudelaire, 'Paris Spleen', 1869.

Wayne,

I had a good meeting with my friends (cc'd in this email) yesterday about the space and we're now more clear on where we stand regarding 302 1st St. The lease you sent looks really good and the rules are more than fair. The place is spacious, beautiful, and located in an ideal location for what we have planned.

Our main concern is the rent, 500\$ a month. Unfortunately, given our various financial situations, it would be very difficult for us to pay that much. We were wondering if this price is negotiable. Ideally, rent within the 320 - 400\$ range could work for us.

One concern you mentioned was the electric usage. We would probably be using much

less electricity than Dickie used. None of us would be living in the space and we estimate about two events per month that would utilize the larger area outside our 20'x20' area, events that would very unlikely to draw more than 50 people and more often than not 20-30 or less.

Heating during the winter is another concern of ours. Utilizing plastic we could probably heat our smaller area a couple times a week (when we used it for meetings etc.), hopefully this would keep electrical costs down for you if we were not trying to heat the larger area constantly.

Also, could we rent a little less square footage to lower the rent? Say 15'x20'?

In considering the space we see our activities as three-fold. We would like to utilize the rented square footage for an office and HQ for research into Roanoke history and geography through Philosophy Inc., which is organized by Matt Ames. The rented space would also be utilized for a zine library, which would function like a lending library, and would be maintained through the collections and archives of Jim Leftwich and Nick Lennard. Attached to this would be a library of archived recordings organized by Aaron Benson. Finally, we would like to host performance art events, sketch comedy shows and music acts roughly twice a month. These events would be open to the public and would hopefully bring in some money through suggested donations (passing the hat around).

Thank you Wayne for your time and consideration. It was great meeting you Sunday and we hope to hear from you soon. If you have any questions feel free to give me a call at (848) 391-3199

Best,

Warren C. Fry
1318 Maple Ave #3
Roanoke VA 24016

warrencfry@gmail.com

Warren Fry to me, Aaron, Nick, Matt
show details Apr 10 (3 days ago)
Hey,

OK, I talked to Wayne over the phone and he said he can't offer us nicer area for less than

500\$ a month, which sucks. He did say that we could rent a section of the area outside the bookshelves, which is less nice and has a number of issues for something within the 320\$ - 400\$ price range. Jim, Aaron, are you still interested in seeing the space?

My thought is that as soon as we moved into this other area of the building we would find ourselves with neighbors who'd rented the nicer area and then we would be contending with there expectations and use of the space. rrrrr

Also, would you guys like to do Collabfest at my place this Wednesday? I have a TV so we could watch Matt's Fantomas movies?

Best,

W

Jim Leftwich to Warren

show details Apr 11 (3 days ago)

warren

what do you think? i'm not feeling very enthusiastic about this space, but i will go with it if that's what you and olchar want to do.

jim

Olchar Lindsann to Warren, me, Aaron, Matt

show details Apr 11 (3 days ago)

Yeah, I regretfully agree, it's probably better to wait and find something else... we can talk about it Wednesday I suppose...

I'll be off @ 9:15 so I'll be over after that... I'll try and track down some of the Surrealist writings on the Fantomas series to bring along...

o

Matt Ames to Olchar, Warren, me, Aaron

show details Apr 11 (3 days ago)

I'll bring the first series, À l'ombre de la guillotine, I think it's close to an hour.

Chat Wednesday. Meet at 9:30?

Jim Leftwich to Matt, Olchar, Warren, Aaron

show details Apr 11 (3 days ago)
wed @ 9:30 works for me

Warren Fry to me, Matt, Olchar, Aaron
show details Apr 11 (3 days ago)
wednesday 9:30 sounds good

Collab Fest 75 - 04.13.11

there are no photographs for this event.
we got together at warren's apartment to watch an episode of Fantomas.



from *Serial Killings: Fantômas, Feuillade, and the Mass-Culture Genealogy of Surrealism* by Robin Walz

In May 1913, the first *Fantômas* film by Gaumont director Louis Feuillade illuminated the

screens of France. The film was an adaptation of the first in a series of *Fantômas* novels by Pierre Souvestre and Marcel Allain, which by that time had reached twenty-eight episodes. The novels and films recounted the exploits of *Fantômas*, "Emperor of Crime" and "Lord of Terror," a notorious archvillain of a thousand faces who cunningly robbed, tortured, and killed scores of innocent victims, individually and en masse. Pitted against the evil machinations of the master-criminal stood the incorruptible Inspector Juve of the Paris *Sûreté*, and Jérôme Fandor, star reporter for *La Capitale*. Together, the heroic duo doggedly pursued the villain, determined to bring him to justice. But the elusive *Fantômas* always escaped. Repeatedly he evaded the long arm of the law in Souvestre and Allain's series of thirty-two *Fantômas* novels, published monthly from February 1911 to September 1913, with sales approaching five million copies. He escaped all over again in Feuillade's five *Fantômas* films, from May 1913 to April 1914, and yet again through international distribution. *Fantômas* was the "Genius Of Evil," and he was tremendously popular.(6)

Over the next two decades, *Fantômas* was championed by the Parisian avant-garde, first by the young poets gathered around Guillaume Apollinaire, who, together with Max Jacob, founded a Société des Amis de *Fantômas* in 1913, and later by the surrealists. In July 1914, in the literary review *Mercure de France*, Apollinaire declared the imaginary richness of *Fantômas* unparalleled.(7) The same month, in Apollinaire's own review, *Les Soirées de Paris*, Maurice Raynal proclaimed Feuillade's *Fantômas* saturated with genius.(8) Over the next two decades, poets such as Blaise Cendrars (who called the series "The Aeneid of Modern Times"), Max Jacob, Jean Cocteau, and Robert Desnos, and painters such as Juan Gris, Yves Tanguy, and René Magritte, incorporated *Fantômas* motifs into their works. Pierre Prévert's 1928 film, *Paris la Belle*, featured a *Fantômas* book cover in the closing sequence, and the Lord of Terror was adapted to the surrealist screen in Ernest Moerman's 1936 film short, *Mr. Fantômas, Chapitre 280,000*.(9) As the century progresses, *Fantômas* remained a minor source of artistic inspiration as the subject of cultural nostalgia.(10)

But what had attracted the French avant-garde to *Fantômas* in the first place? Why, for example, did the pre-surrealist entourage at the literary review *Littérature*, directed by Breton, Aragon and Péret, include the name of *Fantômas* in the genealogy of "Erutarétil," or accursed literature, as a close relative of Lautréamont, Rimbaud, Alfred Jarry, Jacques Vaché, and Raymond Roussel?(11) Or why did *Fantômas* appear upon the family coat of arms of a monkey in a play by Breton, Desnos and Péret entitled "What a Beautiful Day!"?(12) Precisely what role did *Fantômas* play in the collective heritage of the surrealist movement? There were certainly no overt sympathies between the creators of *Fantômas* and the surrealists at the level of literary or cinematic production. Coauthors Souvestre and Allain were two very bourgeois and pedestrian journalists with little appreciation for the

experimental literary currents of the era, who were more enticed by Parisian publisher Arthème Fayard II's lucrative pulp fiction contract of 2,000 francs per novel (plus 3 centimes per book on sales over 50,000) and by 6,000 francs from Gaumont studios.(13) Léon Gaumont negotiated the film rights to *Fantômas* with Souvestre and Allain in the hopes of producing a blockbuster commercial victory over his rival, Pathé Frères. Gaumont entrusted the film the film adaptation to his chief studio director, Louis Feuillade, a conservative ultra-Catholic and political monarchist. It is impossible to conceive that any of these parties responsible for the creation of the novel and film serials would have attached their names willingly to the manifestoes of surrealism.

Instead, the surrealist connection to *Fantômas* was made directly at the level of the serials themselves. Beyond the conservative views of its literary and film authors, or the profit motives of Fayard's publishing firm and Gaumont studios, the violently fantastic poetics of *Fantômas* exceeded the ideological constrictions of its production. According to J. H. Matthews, an otherwise ordinary commercial film displays surreal attributes when its content "overspills the mold in which it has been cast."(14) Along related lines, Francis Lacassin, a leading French critic on paraliterature, has noted that in the *Fantômas* novel series "there was an overflowing of the fantastic into daily life which seems to have had an affinity with surrealist preoccupations—an insolent challenge to aesthetic and social taboos, a relentless demystification, an historical continuity with what André Breton called dark humor. And above all, objective chance...."(15) In the case of Feuillade's *Fantômas*, Linda Williams has argued that the very crudeness of early movie production, still untainted by stock formulas and film theory, combined with the tremendous popularity of this fresh and new medium, contributed to the surrealists' enthusiasm for this serial.(16) The general point is that *Fantômas* helped to prepare the cultural terrain for the emergence of a surreal modern mythology in the opening decades of the twentieth century.

Yet the profane illumination of *Fantômas* was not created by the surrealists; rather it was a dark spectacle viewed by them. Feuillade's *Fantômas* was not a piece of surrealist cinema, though the serial displayed particular affinities to what can be identified as surrealist motifs. Foremost, the evil *Fantômas* was, to borrow from Linda Williams's vocabulary, a "figure of desire."(17) The character's ephemeral identity oscillates between being a figure of condensation, in which all crimes and murders are committed by the same *Fantômas*, and a figure of displacement, as the actual identity of *Fantômas* continually slides from one mysterious personage to another. Whereas the use of masks and aliases was a stock feature of nineteenth-century French detective fiction and melodrama, in *Fantômas* this motif was taken to new heights, for there was no "someone else" behind the mask.(18) Throughout the series, readers and viewers depended upon Inspector Juve to recognize the visage of *Fantômas* among a wide range of characters. In

the first Fantômas novel, for example, Juve claims that a French businessman named Etienne Rambert, a masked gentleman-burglar, and an English foot-soldier from the Transvaal named Gurn are all the same person: Fantômas! Neither judge nor jury in Gurn's murder trial accepts the detective's fantastic and obsessive ratiocinations, however. In the second novel, Juve contre Fantômas, Juve pursues both Dr. Chaleck, a Belgian surgeon practicing at the Lariboisière Hospital in Paris, and an underworld apache gang leader named Loupart, as Fantômas. At the end of this same episode, the Lord Of Terror assumes his "true" appearance en cagoule, an anonymous and menacing shadow, stripped of all physically distinguishing features and dressed in a black bodysuit with a cowl covering his head. Henceforth in this series, Fantômas is equally likely to appear as yet someone else or as the faceless Man in Black.

Collab Fest 76 - 04.20.11

there are no photographs for this event.

invitation from Warren Fry:

Hey folks!

Join us for another rousing edition of Collabfest at the MCCBR in connection with the Labyrinth show! This week we'll be talking with Christine Carr about her installation "*The Gas Station Chronicles*" and generally mixing it up over whichever topics, interests or projects strike our collective fancy! I think Christine's piece is an amazing starting point for conversations directed at process, experientiality, environment, environmentalism, and so much more! This will be a fun conversation with great folks.

We hope to see you there!

Where: Metropolitan Community Church of the Blue Ridge
806 Jamison Ave SE
Roanoke VA, 24013

When: Wednesday April 20th at 8 pm

As always this event is free and open to the public. Please spread this email as I'm certain there are people I've forgotten to add!

Best,

Warren C. Fry

Christine Carr: "Since 2005, I've taken photos every time I stop to get gas. I also save the receipt and usually write comments on the back pertaining to my location, what I'm doing and/or state of mind."

<http://gas-station-chronicles.blogspot.com/>



Collab Fest 77 - 04.27.11

Rosa Luxemburg

What Are the Origins of May Day?

(1894)

The happy idea of using a proletarian holiday celebration as a means to attain the eight-hour day was first born in Australia. The workers there decided in 1856 to organize a day of complete stoppage together with meetings and entertainment as a demonstration in favor of the eight-hour day. The day of this celebration was to be April 21. At first, the Australian workers intended this only for the year 1856. But this first celebration had such a strong effect on the proletarian masses of Australia, enlivening them and leading to new agitation, that it was decided to repeat the celebration every year.

In fact, what could give the workers greater courage and faith in their own strength than a mass work stoppage which they had decided themselves? What could give more courage to the eternal slaves of the factories and the workshops than the mustering of their own troops? Thus, the idea of a proletarian celebration was quickly accepted and, from Australia, began to spread to other countries until finally it had conquered the whole proletarian world.

The first to follow the example of the Australian workers were the Americans. In 1886 they decided that May 1 should be the day of universal work stoppage. On this day 200,000 of them left their work and demanded the eight-hour day. Later, police and legal harassment prevented the workers for many years from repeating this [size] demonstration. However in 1888 they renewed their decision and decided that the next celebration would be May 1, 1890.

In the meanwhile, the workers' movement in Europe had grown strong and animated. The most powerful expression of this movement occurred at the International Workers' Congress in 1889. At this Congress, attended by four

hundred delegates, it was decided that the eight-hour day must be the first demand. Whereupon the delegate of the French unions, the worker Lavigne from Bordeaux, moved that this demand be expressed in all countries through a universal work stoppage. The delegate of the American workers called attention to the decision of his comrades to strike on May 1, 1890, and the Congress decided on this date for the universal proletarian celebration.

In this case, as thirty years before in Australia, the workers really thought only of a one-time demonstration. The Congress decided that the workers of all lands would demonstrate together for the eight-hour day on May 1, 1890. No one spoke of a repetition of the holiday for the next years. Naturally no one could predict the lightning-like way in which this idea would succeed and how quickly it would be adopted by the working classes. However, it was enough to celebrate the May Day simply one time in order that everyone understand and feel that May Day must be a yearly and continuing institution [...].

The first of May demanded the introduction of the eight-hour day. But even after this goal was reached, May Day was not given up. As long as the struggle of the workers against the bourgeoisie and the ruling class continues, as long as all demands are not met, May Day will be the yearly expression of these demands. And, when better days dawn, when the working class of the world has won its deliverance then too humanity will probably celebrate May Day in honor of the bitter struggles and the many sufferings of the past.

1886: The Haymarket Martyrs and Mayday

Submitted by Steven. on Sep 11 2006 09:54



The history of the world holiday on the 1st May - Mayday, held in commemoration of four anarchists executed for struggling for an 8-hour day.

Originally a pagan holiday, the roots of the modern Mayday bank holiday are in the fight for the eight-hour working day in Chicago in 1886, and the subsequent execution of innocent anarchist trade unionists.

In 1887, four Chicago anarchists were executed; a fifth cheated the hangman by killing himself in prison. Three more were to spend 6 years in prison until pardoned by Governor Altgeld who said the trial that convicted them was characterised by "hysteria, packed juries and a biased judge". The state had, in the words of the prosecution put "Anarchy is on trial" and hoped their deaths would also be the death of the anarchist idea.

The anarchists were trade union organisers and May Day became an international workers day to remember their sacrifice. They were framed on false charges of throwing a bomb at police breaking up a demonstration in Chicago. This was part of a strike demanding an 8 hour day involving 400,000 workers in Chicago that started May 1st 1886 .

It began over a century ago when the American Federation of Labour adopted an historic resolution which asserted that "eight hours shall constitute a legal day's labour from and after May 1st, 1886".

In the months prior to this date workers in their thousands were drawn into the struggle for the shorter day. Skilled and unskilled, black and white, men and women, native and immigrant were all becoming involved.

Chicago

In Chicago alone 400,000 were out on strike. A newspaper of that city reported that "no smoke curled up from the tall chimneys of the factories and mills, and things had assumed a Sabbath-like appearance". This was the main centre of the agitation, and here the anarchists were in the forefront of the labour movement. It was to no small extent due to

their activities that Chicago became an outstanding trade union centre and made the biggest contribution to the eight-hour movement.

The Chicago anarchist movement was also strong. In 1884, they produced the world's first Anarchist daily newspaper, the Chicagoer Arbeiter-Zeitung, plus a weekly, Fackel, and a Sunday edition, Vorbote. By 1886, these newspapers had a circulation of over 26,000 - read by the large German immigrant working class community of the city. There were also newspapers for English, Bohemian and Scandinavian speakers. As well as this, Chicago anarchists were active in the unions and organised picnics, lectures, dances, libraries and other events for workers. These helped forge strong bonds of class solidarity, which was worrying to the bosses who were keen to break the workers' organisations.

When on May 1st 1886, the eight hour strikes convulsed that city, one half of the workforce at the McCormick Harvester Co. came out. Two days later a mass meeting was held by 6,000 members of the 'lumber shovers' union who had also come out. The meeting was held only a block from the McCormick plant and was joined by some 500 of the strikers from there.

The workers listened to a speech by the anarchist August Spies, who has been asked to address the meeting by the Central Labour Union. While Spies was speaking, urging the workers to stand together and not give in to the bosses, the strikebreakers were beginning to leave the nearby McCormick plant.

The strikers, aided by the 'lumber shovers' marched down the street and forced the scabs back into the factory. Suddenly a force of 200 police arrived and, without any warning, attacked the crowd with clubs and revolvers. They killed at least one striker, seriously wounded five or six others and injured an indeterminate number.

Outraged by the brutal assaults he had witnessed, Spies went to the office of the Arbeiter-Zeitung and composed a circular calling on the workers of Chicago to attend a protest meeting the following night.

The protest meeting took place in the Haymarket Square and was addressed by Spies and two other anarchists active in the trade union movement, Albert Parsons and Samuel Fielden.

The police attack

Throughout the speeches the crowd was orderly. Mayor Carter Harrison, who was present from the beginning of the meeting, concluded that "nothing looked likely to happen to require police interference". He advised police captain John Bonfield of this and suggested that the large force of police reservists waiting at the station house be sent home.

It was close to ten in the evening when Fielden was closing the meeting. It was raining heavily and only about 200 people remained in the square. Suddenly a police column of 180 men, headed by Bonfield, moved in and ordered the people to disperse immediately. Fielden protested "we are peaceable".

Bomb

At this moment a bomb was thrown into the ranks of the police. It killed one, fatally wounded six more and injured about seventy others. The police opened fire on the spectators. How many were wounded or killed by the police bullets was never exactly ascertained.

A reign of terror swept over Chicago. The press and the pulpit called for revenge, insisting the bomb was the work of socialists and anarchists. Meeting halls, union offices, printing works and private homes were raided. All known socialists and anarchists were rounded up. Even many individuals ignorant of the meaning of socialism and anarchism were arrested and tortured. "Make the raids first and look up the law afterwards" was the public statement of Julius Grinnell, the state's attorney.

Trial

Eventually eight men stood trial for being "accessories to murder". They were Spies, Fielden, Parsons, and five other anarchists who were influential in the labour movement, Adolph Fischer, George Engel, Michael Schwab, Louis Lingg and Oscar Neebe.

The trial opened on June 21st 1886 in the criminal court of Cooke County. The candidates for the jury were not chosen in the usual manner of drawing names from a box. In this case a special bailiff, nominated by state's attorney Grinnell, was appointed by the court to select the candidates. The defence was not allowed to present evidence that the special bailiff had publicly claimed "I am managing this case and I know what I am about. These fellows are going to be hanged as certain as death".

Rigged jury

The eventual composition of the jury was farcical; being made up of businessmen, their clerks and a relative of one of the dead policemen. No proof was offered by the state that any of the eight men before the court had thrown the bomb, had been connected with its throwing, or had even approved of such acts. In fact, only three of the eight had been in Haymarket Square that evening.

No evidence was offered that any of the speakers had incited violence, indeed in his evidence at the trial Mayor Harrison described the speeches as "tame". No proof was offered that any violence had been contemplated. In fact, Parsons had brought his two small children to the meeting.

Sentenced

That the eight were on trial for their anarchist beliefs and trade union activities was made clear from the outset. The trial closed as it had opened, as was witnessed by the final words of Attorney Grinnell's summation speech to the jury. "Law is on trial. Anarchy is on trial. These men have been selected, picked out by the Grand Jury, and indicted because they were leaders. There are no more guilty than the thousands who follow them.

Gentlemen of the jury; convict these men, make examples of them, hang them and you save our institutions, our society."

On August 19th seven of the defendants were sentenced to death, and Neebe to 15 years

in prison. After a massive international campaign for their release, the state 'compromised' and commuted the sentences of Schwab and Fielden to life imprisonment. Lingg cheated the hangman by committing suicide in his cell the day before the executions. On November 11th 1887 Parsons, Engel, Spies and Fischer were hanged.

Pardoned

600,000 working people turned out for their funeral. The campaign to free Neebe, Schwab and Fielden continued.

On June 26th 1893 Governor Altgeld set them free. He made it clear he was not granting the pardon because he thought the men had suffered enough, but because they were innocent of the crime for which they had been tried. They and the hanged men had been the victims of "hysteria, packed juries and a biased judge".

The authorities had believed at the time of the trial that such persecution would break the back of the eight-hour movement. Indeed, evidence later came to light that the bomb may have been thrown by a police agent working for Captain Bonfield, as part of a conspiracy involving certain steel bosses to discredit the labour movement.

When Spies addressed the court after he had been sentenced to die, he was confident that this conspiracy would not succeed:

"If you think that by hanging us you can stamp out the labour movement... the movement from which the downtrodden millions, the millions who toil in misery and want, expect salvation - if this is your opinion, then hang us! Here you will tread on a spark, but there and there, behind you - and in front of you, and everywhere, flames blaze up. It is a subterranean fire. You cannot put it out".

Thomas Morton, Revels in New Canaan (1637)

The Inhabitants of Pasonagessit (having translated the name of their habitation from that ancient Salvage name to Ma-reMount [MerryMount]; and being resolved to have the new name confirmed for a memorial to after ages) did devise amongst themselves to have it performed in a solemne manner with Revels, & merriment after the old English custorne: prepared to sett up a Maypole upon the festivall day of Philip and Jacob ; & therefore brewed a barrell of excellent beer, & provided a case of bottles to be spent, with other good cheer, for all comers of that day. And because they would have it in a complete forme, they had prepared a song fitting to the time and present occasion. And upon Mayday they brought the Maypole to the place appointed, with drums, guns, pistols, and other fitting instruments, for that purpose ; and there erected it with the help of Salvages, that came thether of purpose to see the manner of our Revels. A goodly pine tree of 80 foot long, was reared up, with a pair of buckshorns nailed one, somewhat neare unto the top of

it : where it stood as a faire sea marke for directions; how to finde out the way to mine Hoste of Ma-reMount.

And because it should more fully appeare to what end it was placed there, they had a poem in readiness made, which was fixed to the Maypole, to shew the new name confirmed upon that plantation; which although it were made according to the occurrents of the time, it being Enigmatically composed) puzzled the Seperatists most pitifully to expound it. . . .

The setting up of this Maypole was a lamentable spectacle to the precise seperatists : that lived at new Plymouth. They termed it an Idol; yea they called it the Calf of Horeb: and stood at defiance with the place, naming it Mount Dagon; threatening to make it a woefull mount and not a merry mount. . . .

There was likewise a merry song made, which (to make their Revells more fashionable) was sung with a chorus, every man bearing his part; which they performed in a dance, hand in hand about the Maypole, whiles one of the Company sung, and filled out the good liquor like gammedes and Jupiter.

The Songe

Drinke and be merry, merry, merry boyes,
Let all your delight be in Hymens joyes,
Iô to Hymen now the day is come,
About the merry Maypole take a Roome.
Make greene garlands, bring bottles out;
And fill sweet Nectar, freely about,
Uncover thy head, and feare no harm,
For hers good liquor to keepe it warme.
Then drinke and be merry, &c.

Iô to Hymen, &c.

Nectar is a thing assign'd,
By the Deities owne minde,
To cure the hart opprest with grief,
And of good liquors is the chief,
Then drinke, &c.

Iô to Hymen, &c.

Give to the Mellancolly man,
A cup or two of't now and than;
This physick' will soone revive his bloud,
And make him be of a merrier mood.

Then drinke, &c.

Iô to Hymen, &c.

Give to the Nymphe thats free from scorne,

No Irish; stuff nor Scotch over worn,
Lasses in beaver coats come away,
Ye shall be welcome to us night and day.

Then drinke, &c.
Iô to Hymen, &c.

This harmless mirth made by young men (that lived in hope to have wives brought over to them, that would save them a labour to make a voyage to fetch any over) was much distasted, of the precise Separatists: that keep much ado, about the tithe of Muit [mint] and Cunmin ; troubling their braines more then reason would require about things that are indifferent: and from that time sought occasion against my honest Host of Ma-reMount to overthrow his undertakings, and to destroy his plantation quite and cleane . . .

Source: Thomas Morton, *A New English Canaan* (Amsterdam, 1637)

Collab Fest 78 - 05.04.2011

De-installation at the Labyrinth in the Church

Contributors to the Scores exhibit, Mail Art Show and Small Press Zine Library in the Labyrinth:

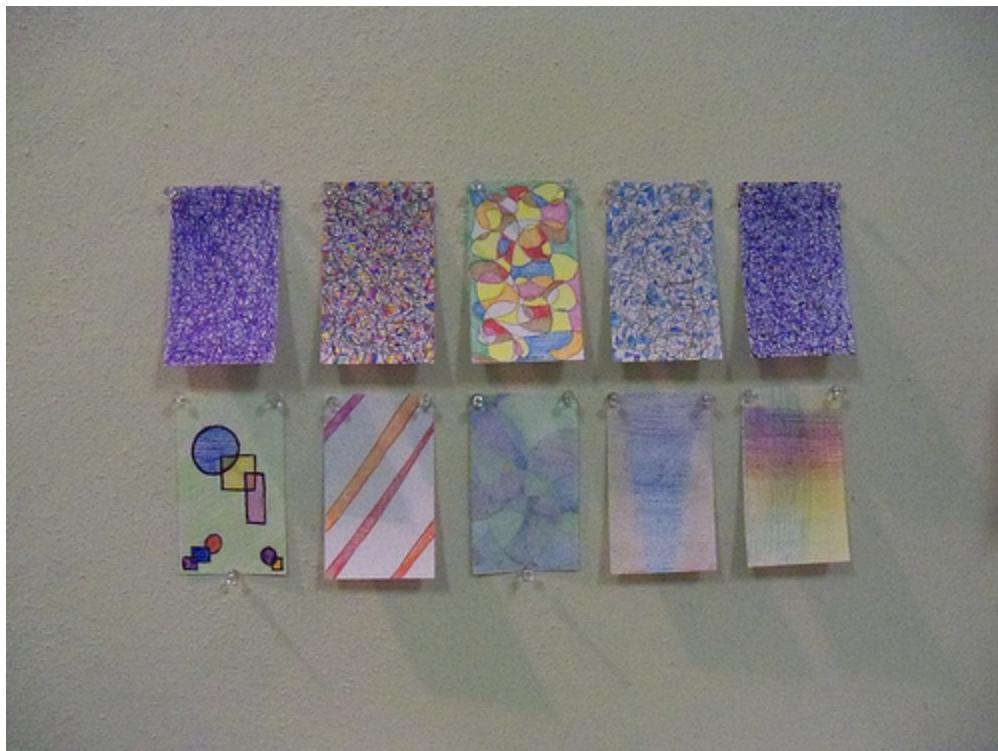
Warren Fry, Reed Altemus, Tom Cassidy/Musicmaster, Sarah Miller, Roman Miles, Tim Campbell, John M. Bennett, Steve Dalachinsky, Jukka-Pekka Kervinen, Keith Buchholz, Bill Beamer, Sue Leftwich, Jim Leftwich, Don Hilla, Diana Magallon, Sheila Murphy, Geof Huth, Jeff Crouch, Grigori Antonin/No John Rays, Victor, Pam Woods, Claudio Grandinetti, DeVillo Sloan, John Tostada/Oh Boy, La Toan Vinh, David Dellaflora, Henry Kindermann, Serge Segay, Rea Nikanova, Olchar Lindsann, Tomislav Butkovic, Tsubasa Berg, Brad Chriss, Megan Blafas, Sarah Granett, Andrew Topel, Scott MacLeod, Cathy Bennett, Kathy Ernst, Harriet Bart, Robie Lurie, Scott Helmes, Anna Banana, Matt Taggart, Crank Sturgeon, Jessy Kendall, Jokie Wilson, John Crouse, John High, Jake Berry, Rod Summers, Carol Stetser, Carol Starr, Mike Dickau, Billy Mavreas, Rabbit, Jurgen Olbrich, Frips, Bela Grimm, Sara Adrian, Darlene Altschul, Helen Amyes, Joel Cohen/The Sticker Dude, Roland Halbritter, Tom Taylor, Buzz Blurr, Miekal And, The Baby Nous Cult, Shawn McMurtagh, Ejva Nsva, Yuka Nakatani, Ramon Cruces, Noe Cuellar, Peter Ganick, Sean Burn, Dewi, Fleur Helsingor, Mark Sonnenfeld



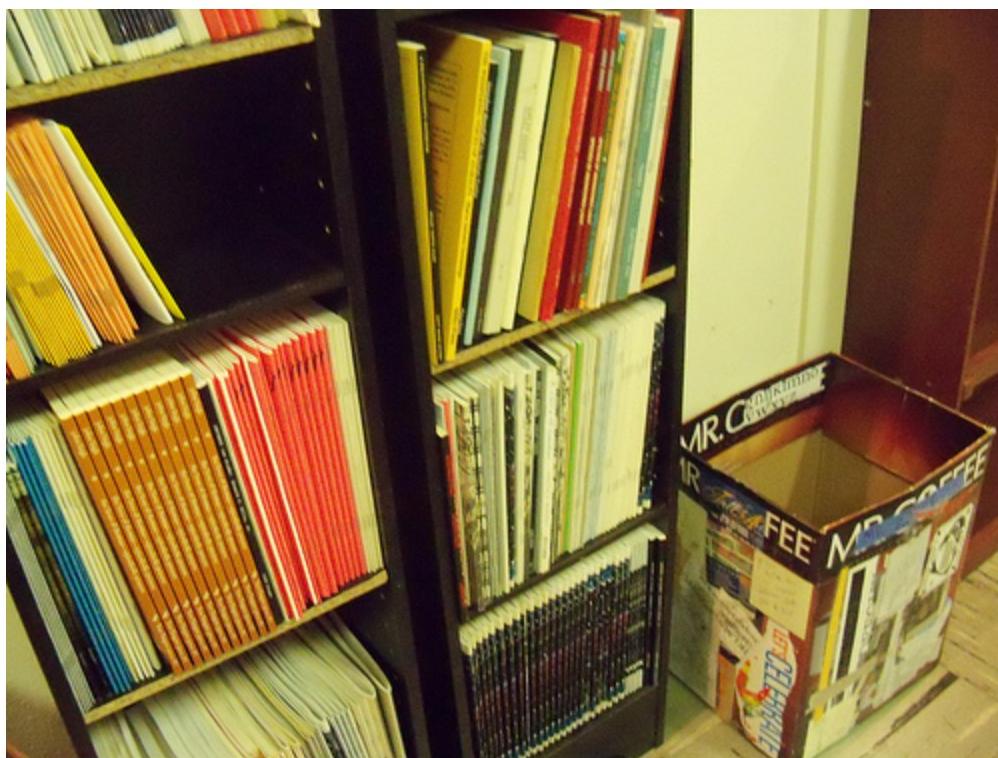
warren fry - installation



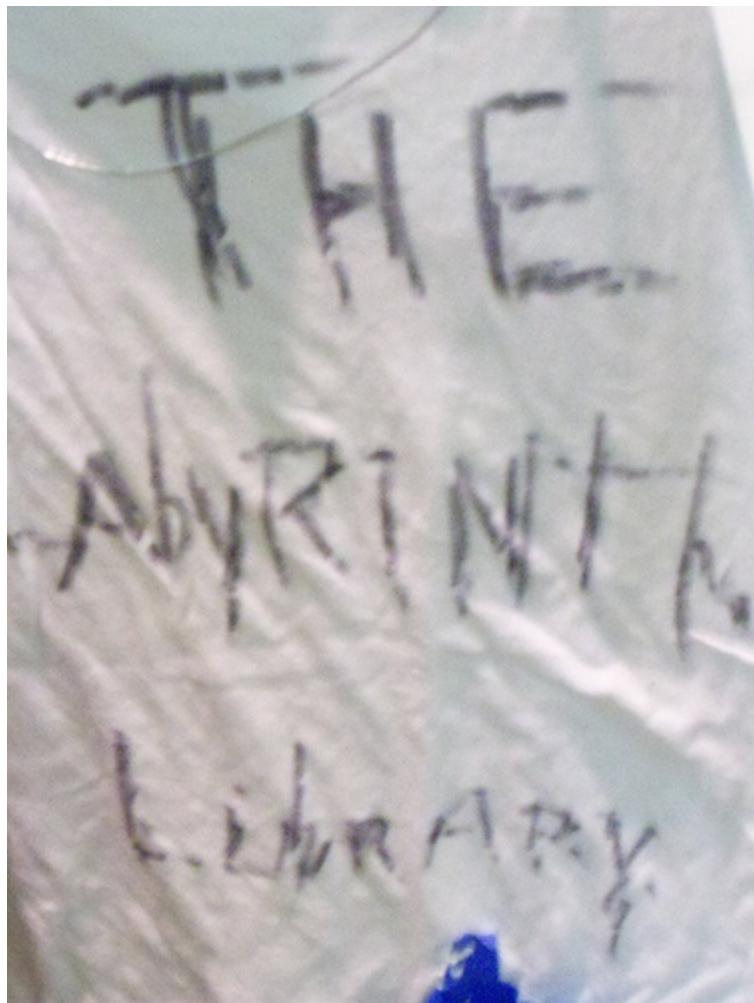
bill beamer and brian counihan



index cards by sue leftwich



juxta/3300 press, mid-90s, edited and published by don hill and jim leftwich



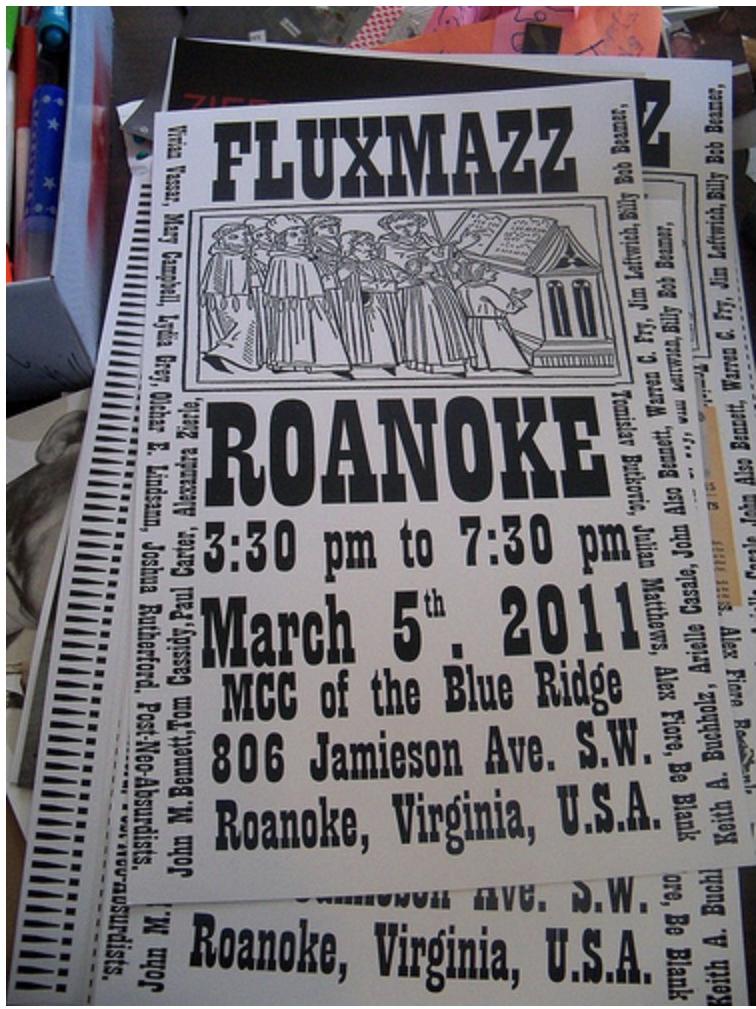
the labyrinth library t-shirt banner



pam woods and warren fry working on cut-up and collaged t-shirts



sara adrian, rabbit, sue leftwich, bela grimm, and aaron bensen, with the mail art and scores exhibit in the labyrinth library



fluxmazz poster by keith buchholz



geoff conley, organizer of the may day workers' rights rally



bill beamer and jim leftwich



warren fry - deinstallation

Thanks to pastor Joe Cobb and the congregation of The Metropolitan Community Church of The Blue Ridge.

Collab Fest 79 - 05.11.2011

Evan Damerow and Emma Colligan visiting from New Zealand.

Modified rubber stamps.

An add and pass collage book.

Tips.

Grilled chicken

Salsa enhanced with habaneros from Bela Grimm.

|||||

Ruud Janssen:

Originally the rubberstamp was made for a special user-group of people. The decision makers that had access to their stamp and by using it, authorized certain decisions. In the bureaucracy an essential part. The art-forms that avoided the settled art world off course embraced the possibilities to use their own rubberstamps and to ridicule certain hierarchies in these closed circles.

The Rubberstamp was originally focused on text. In the Mail-Art and Fluxus world the texts people wanted to print were different from what 'normal' people would print. Creativity always leads to strange results. To make a statement and to reproduce it was in the 60-ies and 70-ies not easy. The copy machine was not everywhere available, and quickly reproducing a text or a document even printing texts on paper and envelopes had become easy with that rubberstamp.

collab fest 80 - 05.18.2011

Artifacts of the Eternal Network

by Estera Milman

The rubric "Eternal Network" has come to be understood as being coterminous with "mail art" and/or "correspondence works." While some revisionist historians of the contemporary arts are currently attempting to challenge this assumption, they tend to do so by expanding the sets of objects that they believe are encompassable by Robert Filliou's term. Thus the Eternal Network is becoming an acceptable descriptor, not only for artists' stamp sheets, postcards, rubber stamp imprints, and other postal works, but also for the periodicals, photocopies, and other forms of production realized by members of international correspondence art networks. What is lost sight of in this admirable historiographic process is the fact that Filliou's *Fête Permanente* (constant feast or festival) was a permanent celebration, not of artworks, but of actions and events. Furthermore, for Filliou and his co-conspirator George Brecht, the Eternal Network had absolutely nothing to do with art as a privileged, unnatural thing, situated within a separate realm. For them (although admittedly not for all correspondence network participants), the artist was but one player in a wider network of everyday events, doings, and sufferings "going on around him all the time in all parts of the

world." [3]



Anonymous, *Masturbation Unit...Clitoral Stimulator...Fanny Tickler*, n.d.

The primary defining characteristic of all correspondence art networks is that they are communication "cultures." In their pure transitive state (outside the museum, gallery, and alternative space system) correspondence works are overtly transactional; they serve as a means by which community is established and through which members of the culture interact. Because (despite Filliou's intention to the contrary) correspondence art networks are distinguishable from majority culture communities based on their self-determination as alternative "art" cultures, they fall heir to a primary defining principle of the historical avant-garde. In their critique of the institution of art as well as of larger cultural constructs, participants in correspondence art networks fulfill a fundamental prerequisite for membership in this venerated tradition of artistic activism. The modernist concept of a cultural avant-garde was optimistically prophesied in 1825 by Saint-Simon during a period of utopian progressivism. The artist was originally positioned within a cultural committee of socially conscious individuals whose charge, mandated by the heirs of the Enlightenment, entailed a collaborative attempt to move culture ahead to a better future. The artist was not only to take his or her place alongside the scientist and philosopher, but was understood, by a society governed by idealism, to be particularly well qualified to make substantial contributions to the dissemination of the value structures of this new world. By the early twentieth-century, having long since become specific to literary and artistic actions, the concept "avant-garde" had come to be inseparable from the aesthetic basis of community building and "culturing."



Leonard Frank Duch, *Art and Life*, n.d.

ART

To justify artist's professional, parasitic and elite status in society,
he must demonstrate artist's indispensability and exclusiveness,
he must demonstrate the dependability of audience upon him,
he must demonstrate that no one but the artist can do art.

FLUXUS ART-AMUSEMENT

To establish artist's nonprofessional status in society,
he must demonstrate artist's dispensability and inclusiveness,
he must demonstrate the selfsufficiency of the audience,
he must demonstrate that anything can be art and anyone can do it.

Therefore, art must appear to be complex, pretentious, profound, serious, intellectual, inspired, skillful, significant, theatrical, It must appear to be valuable as commodity so as to provide the artist with an income. To raise its value (artist's income and patrons profit), art is made to appear rare, limited in quantity and therefore obtainable and accessible only to the social elite and institutions.

Therefore, art-amusement must be simple, amusing, upretentious, concerned with insignificances, require no skill or countless rehearsals, have no commodity or institutional value. The value of art-amusement must be lowered by making it unlimited, massproduced, obtainable by all and eventually produced by all. Fluxus art-amusement is the rear-guard without any pretension or urge to participate in the competition of "one-upmanship" with the avant-garde. It strives for the monostructural and nontheatrical qualities of simple natural event, a game or a gag. It is the fusion of Spikes Jones Vaudeville, gag, children's games and Duchamp.

Manifesto on Art / Fluxus Art Amusement by George Maciunas, 1965.





collab fest 81 - 06.22.2011

there are no photos for this event.

every time two or more artists meet in 2010 to discuss and promote a therapeutic ecology of art, you have a session of ART DETOX

THREE EASY STEPS TO A COMPLETE ART DETOX EXPERIENCE

- 1- think about all the art excesses that prevent you from having a pure and healthy creative life
- 2 - conceive and organize your own private or public ART DETOX session
- 3 - document it and share it with others on <http://artdetox2010.ning.com>
(Vittore Baroni)

and/or

every time two or more people meet at any time to discuss or make anything, you have a session of Collab Fest

THREE EASY STEPS TO A COMPLETE COLLAB FEST EXPERIENCE

- 1- think about all the life excesses that prevent you from having a pure and healthy collaborative life
- 2 - conceive and organize your own private or public COLLAB FEST session
- 3 - document it and share it with others

http://www.sztuka-fabryka.be/encyclopaedia/items/networker_congres.htm

http://www.sztuka-fabryka.be/encyclopaedia/items/eternal_network.htm

and so it vanishes into the eternal network, or does it...

collab fest 82 - 06.25.2011

performances of four of the cowboy plays, written by dick higgins in 1967. performed by warren fry, olchar lindsann and jim leftwich. video forthcoming by matt ames.

COWBOY PLAYS / Dick Higgins. 1967

COWBOY PLAYS - A Game of 52 Soaphorse Operas

COWBOY PLAY #1

SCENE: The Forest

SQUIRREL #1: Nuts!

SQUIRREL #2: Nuts!

SQUIRRELS #1 & #2: Delicious!

CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #2

SCENE: The Fireplace

LOG #1: I'm burning!

LOG #2: I'm burning!

LOGS #1 & #2: Rather not!

CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #3

SCENE: Hugging, his hands in her slacks.

SHE: Is it me you're kissing, or do I simply mean something to you?

CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #4

LEGIONAIRE: Never!!! (pause) Well, maybe.

OUR GAL: Never!!! (pause) Never!!!

CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #5

EMPTY: I wanna be full.

FULL: Do you really?

EMPTY: Have I any choice?

CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #6

SCENE: The Revolution

ONE: Shall I?

TWO: Have you any choice?

CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #7

SCENE: Inferno, the ninth circle.

2nd DIGGER: Since you can ask, I do not understand
the question.

CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #8

SCENE: Nature, as perfected for soliloquys – angels flitting about.

TRAGEDIAN: I suffer from timelessness, or is it willessness?

I suffer from willessness, or is it...

CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #9

A: Blast!

B: Glad to oblige! (blast!)

CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #10

SHE: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5...

HE: 1, 2, 3, 4...

SHE: 1, 2, 3...

HE: 1, 2...

SHE: 1...

CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #11

HE: Gentle me, hurt me.

SHE: Hurt me, gentle me.

ANOTHER: Better start again.

CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #12

NOSE: If I were God, I doubt I'd do much better than
he did with me.

FINGER: I doubt that, dear.

CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #13

HAVE: I can make it, but I can't make it.

HAVE NOT: I can shake it, but I can't shake it.

CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #14

HE: On Church we play -

THEY: – In church we pray.

CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #15

SHE: The only good women I've ever known,
have been men.

CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #16

EL HOMBRE: Quien Sabe?
LA CHIQUITA: Quien Sabe?
CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #17

IN: Are you in?
OUT: I don't think so.
IN: Wait a minute baby.
CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #18

LOST 1: Where are you?
LOST 2: I don't know.
LOST 1: I can't find you.
CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #19

YOU: I am here, and I have nothing to say.
I: I am here, and I have nothing to say.
WE: We must be in love.
CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #20

CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #21

SCENE: The barn.
SHE: We swallow and something happens to us.
CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #22

CAT: I never met a bird I didn't like.
CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #23

A: A blessed event.
B: Bawww!
C: It's you!
B: Twist Tweedledum and Tweedledee.
C: Goodbye!

CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #24

SCENE: Thousand of nameless chicks in mod dresses – dancing in front of mirrors
- with one melancholy mod man.

CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #25

He can carry her on his shoulders – and he does.

CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #26

TODDLER: When I grow up I'm going to be even bigger than I am.

CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #27

SHE: Damn! I've been robbed.

HE: So what else is new.

CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #28

SCENE: Among the hoopies.

SHE: Anyone who wants me gets me. Now I'm really alone.

Is that what I meant?

(sound of flowers opening)

CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #29

RATTLESNAKE: I'd rather rattle than strike.

COWBOY: I'd rather strike than fight.

RATTLESNAKE: Let's switch for a while.

CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #30

A: They talk about cobalt.

B: We talk about milk.

CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #31

SCENE: In a grotto.

A wizard raises his eyebrows.

CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #32

SCENE: On a boat.

Slow kettledrums. A cow gives birth.

CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #33

TART: You're sweet.
CAKE: You're sweet.
TART: Let's gobble it all up. We must be in love.
CURTAIN

-

COWBOY PLAY #34

HE: I love to reach out at night and touch you.
SHE: I'm tired.
HE: I like mornings too.
CURTAIN

-

COWBOY PLAY #35

UNCOOKED: I saw a dead one.
COOKED: Was she stiff?
UNCOOKED: Not very.
CURTAIN

-

COWBOY PLAY #36

SCENE: The Prairie.
HE: I love you.
SHE: Why?
HE: Damned if I know. (goes away)
CURTAIN

-

COWBOY PLAY #37

YOU: Go To hell!
ME: Why not?
CURTAIN

-

COWBOY PLAY #38

GLASSY 1: Is one enough?
GLASSY 2: Are two or three?
GLASSY 1: Guess it depends on how much you
can see in one.
CURTAIN

-

COWBOY PLAY #39

SCENE: In a spaghetti factory.
ONE: No!
TWO: I agree!
Possibly an omelette emerges from the nearest spaghetti machine.
CURTAIN

-

COWBOY PLAY #40

ONE: No, I don't want it.
TWO: I do.
ONE: So do I.

CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #41

SCENE: Springtime

SHE: When I am naked I have more to take off than I do now.

CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #42

EGG ONE: I'm an egg.

EGG TWO: So am I.

CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #43

SCENE: At a nudists' convention.

BARTENDER: I have no wings.

INGENUE: So I can see.

CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #44

SCENE: In a delicatessen.

SPHINX 1: This lox is better than that.

SPHINX 2: I'll take that.

CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #45

SENIOR SHE: Well, I never...!

SENIOR HE: I believe you.

CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #46

ONE: Oh, give me a home...

TWO: It's yours.

ONE: No, it isn't.

CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #47

ONE: If I wanted to, would I?

TWO: Of course not.

ONE: Why not?

TWO: You have no wings.

CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #48

HE: I want you. I want you bad.

SHE: Well, since you ask, no.

CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #49

DUR #1: Merdre!

DUR #2: Ou? Rideau.

CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAYS #50

SCENE: A dice game.

DEATH: Crapped out!

WIND: Sorry, dad!

CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #51

ONE: One.

TWO: Two.

CURTAIN

COWBOY PLAY #52

SCENE: Two men, two cafe tables.

ONE: I'm meeting him at 3 o'clock.

TWO: I'm meeting him at three o'clock.

(clock strike three times)

ONE & TWO: Well hi! Been waiting long?

Good to see you !

CURTAIN

JOKER: Play act.

EXTRA JOKER: Play Poker.

|||||||||

STATEMENT ON INTERMEDIA

Art is one of the ways that people communicate. It is difficult for me to imagine a serious person attacking any means of communication per se. Our real enemies are the ones who send us to die in pointless wars or to live lives which are reduced to drudgery, not the people who use other means of communication from those which we find most appropriate to the present situation. When these are attacked, a diversion has been established which only serves the interests of our real enemies.

However, due to the spread of mass literacy, to television and the transistor radio, our sensitivities have changed. The very complexity of this impact gives us

a taste for simplicity, for an art which is based on the underlying images that an artist has always used to make his point. As with the cubists, we are asking for a new way of looking at things, but more totally, since we are more impatient and more anxious to go to the basic images. This explains the impact of Happenings, event pieces, mixed media films. We do not ask any more to speak magnificently of taking arms against a sea of troubles, we want to see it done. The art which most directly does this is the one which allows this immediacy, with a minimum of distractions.

Goodness only knows how the spread of psychedelic means, tastes, and insights will speed up this process. My own conjecture is that it will not change anything, only intensify a trend which is already there.

For the last ten years or so, artists have changed their media to suit this situation, to the point where the media have broken down in their traditional forms, and have become merely puristic points of reference. The idea has arisen, as if by spontaneous combustion throughout the entire world, that these points are arbitrary and only useful as critical tools, in saying that such-and-such a work is basically musical, but also poetry. This is the intermedial approach, to emphasize the dialectic between the media. A composer is a dead man unless he composes for all the media and for his world.

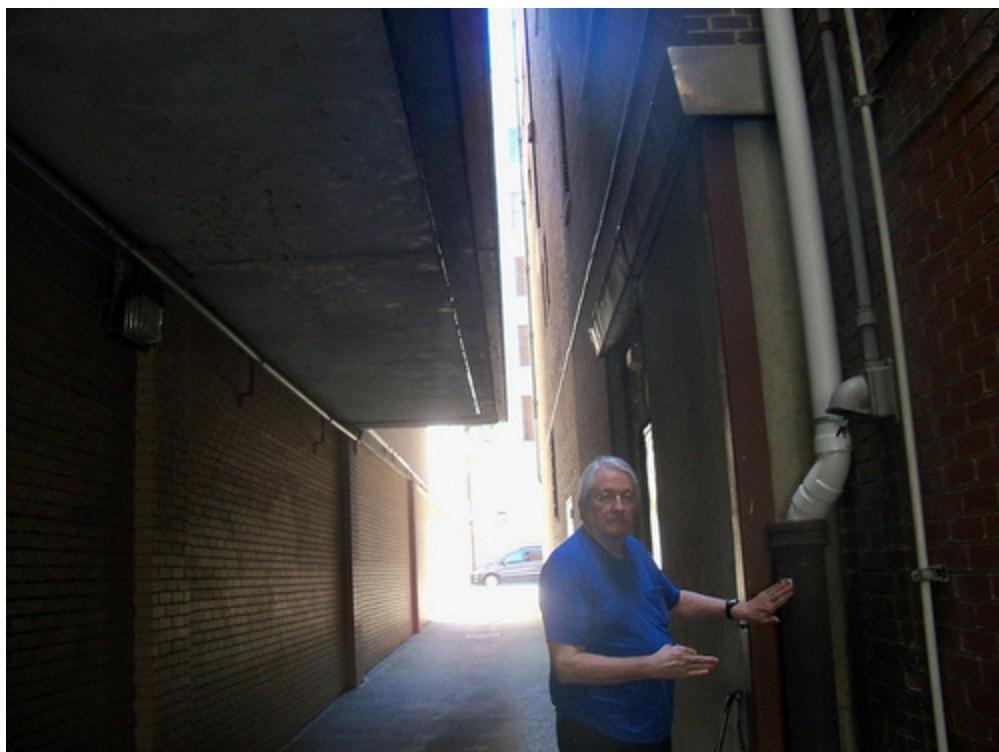
Does it not stand to reason, therefore, that having discovered the intermedia (which was, perhaps, only possible through approaching them by formal, even abstract means), the central problem is now not only the new formal one of learning to use them, but the new and more social one of what to use them for? Having discovered tools with an immediate impact, for what are we going to use them? If we assume, unlike McLuhan and others who have shed some light on the problem up until now, that there are dangerous forces at work in our world, isn't it appropriate to ally ourselves against these, and to use what we really care about and love or hate as the new subject matter in our work? Could it be that the central problem of the next ten years or so, for all artists in all possible forms, is going to be less the still further discovery of new media and intermedia,

but of the new discovery of ways to use what we care about both appropriately and explicitly? The old adage was never so true as now, that saying a thing is so don't make it so. Simply talking about Viet Nam or the crisis in our Labor movements is no guarantee against sterility. We must find the ways to say what has to be said in the light of our new means of communicating. For this we will need new rostrums, organizations, criteria, sources of information. There is a great deal for us to do, perhaps more than ever. But we must now take the first steps.

Dick Higgins
New York
August 3, 1966

collab fest 83 - 06.30.2011

asemic writings/drawings on post-it notes posted around downtown roanoke. the works, by bill beamer, are called *inconsequentialis*.



Artists Statement

Bill Beamer

Over the last 30-plus years, my paintings and drawings, (and related 'free-jazz' performances) have coexisted in the realities of both a Christian/Mystical and a post- Einsteinian Universe. My works visually explore mystical ideas and prayer/meditation/healing processes, as well as my intuitive understanding of string theory, the vibratory interconnectedness of all things, and multiple universes. Like all art, though, the works are ultimately about themselves and the viewer's involvement with them.

At this time, I am concentrating on drawing--- that most basic mode of communication -- in a small format. To paraphrase Blake: "the universe lies in a grain of sand." My best way to realize incalculable enormity is to create its contrasting opposite, seen in the often faintly drawn, small-to-smallest lines, signs, and symbols.

At some point, the viewer needs to see my works through magnification -not a gimmick but a major part of the interactive process. This method becomes a way of revealing initially unseen details in the drawings-as well as random minuscule particles, fingerprints, and detritus-the latter arriving unexpectedly onto the glass and frame surfaces & interacting with the drawings in unplanned, ever changing, interconnected ways.

These drawings -"Messages: Microinteractive Word Dust" -- reflect what I have said above. They provide a means of approaching the subtlest modes of communication, both by use of magnification and by the perceptual (some have said uncanny) "shape shifting" that often occurs on the picture plane (but unfortunately that cannot be seen in reproduction). John Yimin of Outsider Art (outsiderart.info) has written that "Beamer's work lies in a world, somewhere between what you see and what you think." I don't think I can top that.



locations:

center in the square
campbell ave
alley between campbell and kirk
church ave
2nd st
old community high school building



Eternal Network /

The 'Eternal Network' is the concept of an ongoing, global artistic network in which each participating artist realises that s/he is part of a wider network. It is a model of creative activity with no borders between artist and audience, with both working on a common creation. The concept of an 'Eternal Network' originated with the poets and Fluxus artists Robert Filliou (France), who died in 1987, and George Brecht (U.S.A.). They introduced the idea of the 'Eternal Network' in April 1968 on a poster and mailed it to their correspondents. This was the first mention of a model of an international network of artists working together by communication.

The ideas of Filliou and Brecht find their origin in a time when experimental art began to flourish. The ideas of Marcel Duchamp (France) re-emerged, and avant-garde art groups such as Fluxus and Nouveaux Réalistes appeared. Daniel Spoerri (Romania) introduced Filliou to the arts after they met in Paris. As was common in the experimental arts of the sixties, also for Filliou technique was important only as a means to realise ideas and concepts. For Filliou, art is a "permanent creation" and entirely embedded in and inseparable from daily life. Art is one part of the society, as the world is one fragment of the universe, and the universe itself a product of a permanent creation. Art is direct action in the world, in the same sense that religion is only possible in its practice - creating art is art, finishing it is not, and exhibiting it is anti-art.



Immediatism vs Capitalism

Hakim Bey

Many monsters stand between us & the realization of Immediatist goals. For instance our own ingrained unconscious alienation might all too easily be mistaken for a virtue, especially when contrasted with crypto-authoritarian pap passed off as “community,” or with various upscale versions of “leisure.” Isn’t it natural to take the dandyism noir of curmudgeonly hermits for some kind of heroic Individualism, when the only visible contrast is Club Med commodity socialism, or the gemutlich masochism of the Victim Cults? To be doomed & cool naturally appeals more to noble souls than to be saved & cozy.

Immediatism means to enhance individuals by providing a matrix of friendship, not to belittle them by sacrificing their “ownness” to group-think, leftist self-abnegation, or New Age clone-values. What must be overcome is not individuality per se, but rather the addiction to bitter loneliness which characterizes consciousness in the 20th century (which is by & large not much more than a re-run of the 19th).

Far more dangerous than any inner monster of (what might be called) “negative selfishness,” however, is the outward, very real & utterly objective monster of too-Late Capitalism. The Marxists (R.I.P.) had their own version of how this worked, but here we are not concerned with abstract/dialectical analyses of labor-value or class structure (even though these may still require analysis, & even more so since the “death” or “disappearance” of Communism). Instead we’d like to point out specific tactical dangers facing any Immediatist project.

1. Capitalism only supports certain kinds of groups, the nuclear family for example, or “the people I know at my job,” because such groups are already self-alienated & hooked into the Work/Consume/Die structure. Other kinds of groups may be allowed, but will lack all support from the societal structure, & thus find themselves facing grotesque challenges & difficulties which appear under the guise of “bad luck.”

The first & most innocent-seeming obstacle to any Immediatist project will be the “busyness” or “need to make a living” faced by each of its associates. However there is no real innocence here—only our profound ignorance of the ways in which Capitalism itself is organized to prevent all genuine conviviality.

No sooner have a group of friends begun to visualize immediate goals realizable only thru solidarity & cooperation, then suddenly one of them will be offered a “good” job in Cincinnati or teaching English in Taiwan—or else have to move back to California to care for a dying parent—or else they’ll lose the “good” job they already have & be reduced to a state of misery which precludes their very enjoyment of the group’s project or goals (i.e. they’ll become “depressed”). At the most mundane-seeming level, the group will fail to agree on a day of the week for meetings because everyone is “busy.” But this is not mundane. It’s sheer cosmic evil. We whip ourselves into froths of indignation over “oppression” & “unjust laws” when in fact these abstractions have little impact on our daily lives—while that which really makes us miserable goes unnoticed, written off to “busyness” or “distraction” or even to the nature of reality itself (“Well, I can’t live without a job!”).

Yes, perhaps it’s true we can’t “live” without a job—although I hope we’re grown-up enough to know the difference between life & the accumulation of a bunch of fucking gadgets. Still, we must constantly remind ourselves (since our culture won’t do it for us) that this monster called WORK remains the precise & exact target of our rebellious wrath, the one single most oppressive reality we face (& we must learn also to recognize Work when it’s disguised as “leisure”).

To be “too busy” for the Immediatist project is to miss the very essence of Immediatism. To struggle to come together every Monday night (or whatever), in the teeth of the gale of busyness, or family, or invitations to stupid parties—that struggle is already Immediatism itself. Succeed in actually physically meeting face-to-face with a group which is not your spouse-&-kids, or the “guys from my job,” or your 12-Step Program—& you have already achieved virtually everything Immediatism yearns for. An actual project will arise almost spontaneously out of this successful slap-in-the-face of the social norm of alienated boredom. Outwardly, of course, the project will seem to be the group’s purpose, its motive for coming together—but in fact the opposite is true. We’re not kidding or indulging in hyperbole when we insist that meeting face-to-face is already “the revolution.” Attain it & the creativity part comes naturally; like “the kingdom of heaven” it will be added unto you. Of course it will be horribly difficult—why else would we have spent the last decade trying to construct our “bohemia in the mail,” if it were easy to have it in some quartier latin or rural commune? The rat-bastard Capitalist scum who are telling you to “reach out and touch someone” with a telephone or “be there!” (where? alone in front of a goddam television??)—these lovecrafty suckers are trying to turn you into a scrunched-up blood-drained pathetic crippled little cog in the death-machine of the human soul (& let’s not have any theological quibbles about what we mean by “soul”!). Fight them—by meeting with friends, not to consume or produce, but to enjoy friendship—& you will have triumphed (at least for a moment) over the most pernicious conspiracy in EuroAmerican society today—the conspiracy to turn you into a living corpse galvanized by prosthesis & the terror of scarcity—to turn you into a spook haunting your own brain. This is not a petty matter! This is a question of failure or triumph!

2. If busyness & fissipation are the first potential failures of Immediatism, we cannot say that its triumph should be equated with “success.” The second major threat to our project can quite simply be described as the tragic success of the project itself. Let’s say we’ve overcome physical alienation & have actually met, developed our project, & created something (a quilt, a banquet, a play, a bit of eco-sabotage, etc.). Unless we keep it an absolute secret—which is probably impossible & in any case would constitute a somewhat poisonous selfishness—other people will hear of it (other people from hell, to paraphrase the existentialists)—& among these other people, some will be agents (conscious or unconscious, it doesn’t matter) of too-Late Capitalism. The Spectacle—or whatever has replaced it since 1968—is above all empty. It fuels itself by the constant Moloch-like gulping-down of everyone’s creative powers & ideas. It’s more desperate for your “radical subjectivity” than any vampire or cop for your blood. It wants your creativity much more even than you want it yourself. It would die unless you desired it, & you will only desire it if it seems to offer you the very desires you dreamed, alone in your lonely genius, disguised & sold back to you as commodities. Ah, the metaphysical shenanigans of objects! (or words to that effect, Marx cited by Benjamin). Suddenly it will appear to you (as if a demon had whispered it in your ear) that the Immediatist art you’ve created is so good, so fresh, so original, so strong compared to all the crap on the “market”—so pure—that you could water it down & sell it, & make a living at it, so you could all knock off WORK, buy a farm in the country, & do art together forever after. And perhaps it’s true. You could... after all, you’re geniuses. But it’d be better to fly to Hawaii & throw yourself into a live volcano. Sure, you could have success; you could even have 15 seconds on the Evening News—or a PBS documentary made on your life. Yes indeedy.

3. But this is where the last major monster steps in, crashes thru the living room wall, & snuffs you (if Success itself hasn’t already “spoiled” you, that is).

Because in order to succeed you must first be “seen.” And if you are seen, you will be perceived as wrong, illegal, immoral—different. The Spectacle’s main sources of creative energy are all in prison. If you’re not a nuclear family or a guided tour of the Republican Party, then why are you meeting every Monday evening? To do drugs? illicit sex? income tax evasion? satanism?

And of course the chances are good that your Immediatist group is engaged in something illegal—since almost everything enjoyable is in fact illegal. Babylon hates it when anyone actually enjoys life, rather than merely spends money in a vain attempt to buy the illusion of enjoyment. Dissipation, gluttony, bulimic overconsumption—these are not only legal but mandatory. If you don’t waste yourself on the emptiness of commodities you are obviously queer & must by definition be breaking some law. True pleasure in this society is more dangerous than bank robbery. At least bank robbers share Massa’s respect for Massa’s money. But you, you perverts, clearly deserve to be burned at the stake —& here come the peasants with their torches, eager to do the State’s bidding without even being asked. Now you are the monsters, & your little gothic castle of Immediatism is engulfed in flames. Suddenly cops are swarming out of the woodwork. Are your papers in order? Do you have a permit to exist?

Immediatism is a picnic—but it’s not easy. Immediatism is the most natural path for free humans imaginable—& therefore the most unnatural abomination in the eyes of Capital. Immediatism will triumph, but only at the cost of self-organization of power, of clandestinity, & of insurrection. Immediatism is our delight, Immediatism is dangerous.